

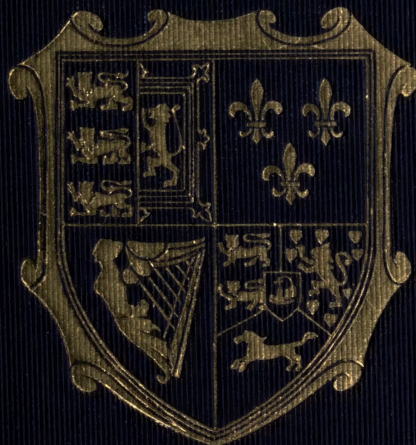
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MEMOIRS
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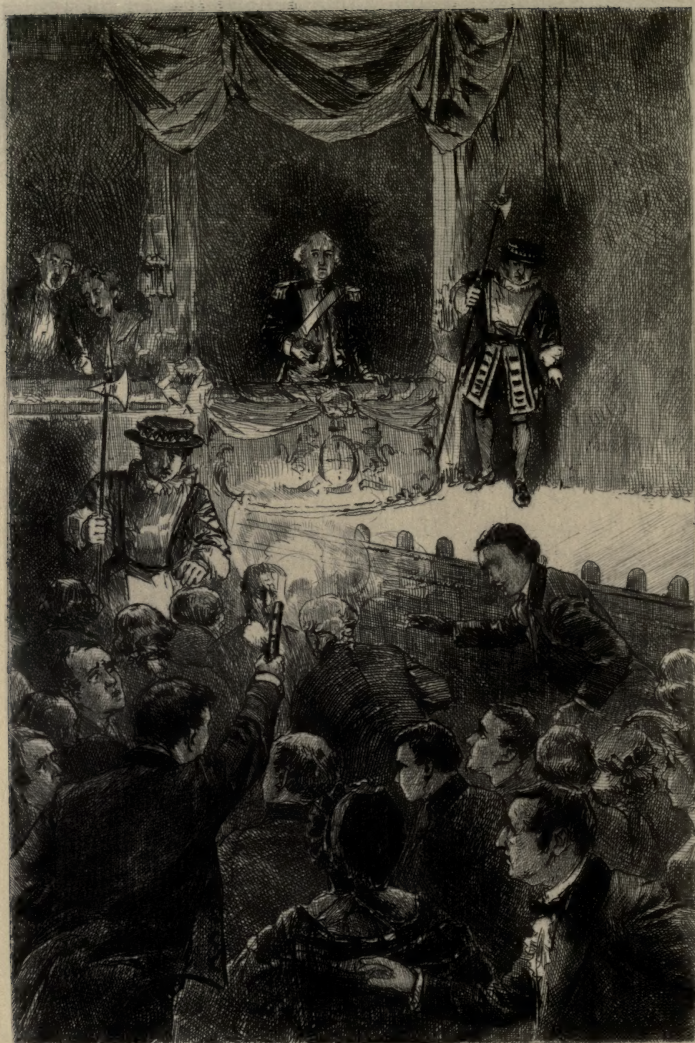
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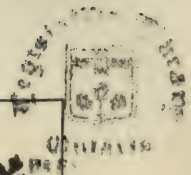
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George III., Vol. IV.

MEMOIRS OF KING GEORGE III.

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THE new ministers had not been many weeks in office before they were guilty of an act of discourtesy toward the king, which, even if he had had no other grounds of complaint against them, would, we imagine, have justified him, had he thought proper to remove them from power. The Prince of Wales being within a few weeks of attaining the age of twenty-one, it had become necessary to settle his future establishment. The

Shelburne ministry, willing to bid high for the favours of the heir to the throne, had, when in office, proposed to confer on the prince a revenue of £100,000 a year, and consequently, now that his "dear Charles" was in power, the prince might reasonably expect at his hands a similar liberal provision. This sum, however, happened to be double the amount of the allowance which had been enjoyed by the king's father, the late Prince of Wales, notwithstanding he was a husband, and the father of a numerous family; for which, and other reasons, two at least of the Cabinet, Lord North and Lord John Cavendish, insisted that the proposed amount was an extravagant one, and that the prince ought to be satisfied with £50,000 a year.¹ Fox, however, had pledged his word to the dissolute young prince, and, rather than depart from his engagement, was resolved to resign, even though his resignation should break up the ministry. As for the heir to the throne, he is said to have been in ecstasies at the near prospect of exchanging the tedium and trammels of paternal authority for the unlimited indulgence of his youthful pleasures.

¹ Fox himself writes to Lord Northington, on the 17th of July: "The truth is, that excepting the Duke of Portland and Lord Keppel, there was not one minister who would have fought with any heart in this cause. I could see clearly from the beginning, long before the difficulties appeared, that Lord North and Lord John, though they did not say so, thought the large establishment extravagant."

In the meantime, although the king ought unquestionably to have been the first person consulted, it was not till the 11th of June, and then only in casual conversation with the Duke of Portland, that he learned how handsome was the provision which the duke and Fox proposed to make for his son. The want of consideration thus shown him by "his son's ministry" — as he is said to have called the coalition — could not fail to offend and hurt him deeply. In the first place, it was far from being either his wish or his policy to render his prodigal and disobedient son so suddenly and so entirely independent of parental control; and, in the next place, assuming the heir to the throne to have a fair claim to the liberal endowment proposed for him by ministers, surely it was to his own father, and not to a party whose political opinions were diametrically opposed to those of his father, that the prince should have been taught to feel himself indebted. Never, exclaimed the king in the bitterness of his feelings, could he forgive an administration that could sacrifice the interests of the public to gratify the wishes of an "ill-advised young man." He is even said to have personally reproached the Duke of Portland with setting up his son in opposition to himself.

The king's mind, however, was soon made up on the subject. Taking into consideration, he said, the heavy expenses of the late war and the financial embarrassment under which the country at

present laboured, he could on no account think of further burthening his subjects with an annual charge amounting to so large a sum as £100,000. He was of opinion that £50,000 a year was quite a sufficient allowance for his son, and that sum he was ready to pay him out of his own civil list. This independent and resolute conduct on the part of the king, in opposition to the strong remonstrances of a majority of the Cabinet, clearly evinced to ministers how insecure they were in their places, nor, in the opinion of Fox, could the king, had he wished to get rid of them, have been afforded a much more favourable opportunity. "They would have had on their side," he writes to Lord Northington, "the various cries of paternal authority, economy, moderate establishment, mischief-making between father and son, and many other plausible topics." Eventually, to the credit of the Prince of Wales, the question was set at rest by his consenting to release his friends from their obligation. Walpole indeed would have us believe that he fell into a fever from vexation, but, on the other hand, we have the authority of Fox himself that the prince behaved "in the handsomest manner." "I believe," writes Fox to Lord Northington, "he was naturally very averse to it, but Colonel Lake,¹

¹ Gerard, created, October 31, 1807, Viscount Lake, as a reward for his brilliant services in India. He was at this period first equerry and commissioner of the horse to the Prince of Wales. He died in February, 1808, at the age of sixty-five.

and others whom he most trusts, persuaded him to it, and the intention of doing so came from him to us spontaneously. If it had not, I own I should have felt myself bound to follow his Royal Highness's line upon the subject, though I know that by so doing I should destroy the ministry in the worst possible way, and subject myself to the imputation of the most extreme wrong-headedness. I shall always, therefore, consider the prince's having yielded a most fortunate event, and shall always feel myself proportionally obliged to him and to those who advised him." It was finally arranged, as originally proposed by the king, that he should allow his son £50,000 a year, over and above the revenue derived from the duchy of Cornwall, which is stated to have amounted at this time to no more than £12,000 a year. The only demand made upon Parliament was for £30,000, to defray the prince's debts, and for a like sum to assist in forming his establishment. How deeply distressing this whole affair was to the king there is ample evidence to prove. He not only told Lord Hertford that he every morning wished himself eighty, or ninety, or dead, but, in one of his interviews with the Duke of Portland, was so affected as to burst into "an agony of tears." Still, obnoxious as were his present ministers to him, he seems to have afforded them little cause for complaint. Much as he disliked them, he told Lord Hertford, he was resolved to give them fair play. Fox was

even sanguine enough to think that ministers were "something stronger" than before the recent altercation. "I believe," he writes, "the king is neither pleased nor displeased with us: that he has no inclination to do anything to serve us, or to hurt us, and that he has no view to any other administration which he means to substitute in lieu of us. If this be so, we shall last the summer, and when Parliament meets, I own I am sanguine." On the 12th of August, Fox again writes: "His Majesty continues, just as he was, very civil, but no more."

But, dire as was the offence which Fox had recently given his sovereign, he was preparing to inflict upon him a still heavier blow, in the shape of his memorable India Bill. Parliament had been prorogued on the 16th of July, and had reassembled on the 11th of November, seven days after which latter date Fox introduced into the House of Commons his plan for the better government of the king's East India dominions. However laudable may have been Fox's intentions; however oppressive might have been the past government of those regions by the East India Company, and however well calculated Fox's measure may have been to rescue the natives from the cruel tyranny by which they were afflicted,¹ certain it is, that, in drawing

¹ In justice to the king, it must be stated that he was neither blind to the abuses which existed in India, nor averse to a wholesome reform in the government of that country. When, eight

up the bill for the consideration of Parliament, the opportunity which it afforded of diminishing the power of the Crown, and, at the same time, of promoting the political interests of Fox and his friends, had not been overlooked. By its provisions, the government of India was to be transferred, for a certain number of years, from the East India Company to a board to consist of seven commissioners, who were not to be removable by the Crown, except on an address of either House of Parliament. Thus, this measure, if carried into effect, would have conveyed to the minister of the day the immense patronage of India; would have rendered him, for a long period to come, independent of the Crown, and, by reducing the sovereign to a corre-

months afterward, Pitt, as prime minister, brought in his India Bill, we find the king writing to him as follows:

“ WINDSOR, July 17, 1784.

“ It is with infinite pleasure I have received Mr. Pitt’s note containing the agreeable account of the committee on the East India Bill having been opened by the decision of so very decided a majority. I trust this will prevent much trouble being given in its further progress, and that this measure may lay a foundation for, by degrees, correcting those shocking enormities in India that disgrace human nature, and, if not put a stop to, threaten the expulsion of the company out of that wealthy region. I have the more confidence of success from knowing Mr. Pitt’s good sense, which will make him not expect that the present experiment shall at once prove perfect; but that by an attentive eye, and an inclination to do only what is right, he will, as occasions arise, be willing to make such improvements as may by degrees bring this arduous work into some degree of perfection.

“ G. R.”

sponding state of subjection, would have been at direct variance with the spirit of the Constitution. It was a measure which, as Fox himself was well aware, could only be carried into law by daring and tact of no common order, and, by what Fox's enemies would doubtless add, some dereliction of political probity. To his friend, Lord Northington, Fox writes that it is "a vigorous and hazardous measure, on which all depended;" while the less sanguine and more sagacious Lord North regarded it in a still more "hazardous" point of view. He considered it, he said, "a good receipt to knock up an administration." Of the new board, Earl Fitzwilliam was designed to be chairman, and George North, Lord North's eldest son, one of its members.

But, in the general estimation of the public, it was not so much the encroachment on the royal prerogative — which, being only indirectly aimed at, was scarcely perceptible — that rendered Fox's measure a perilous one, but the sweeping violation which it contemplated of chartered rights and immunities. No sooner, then, were its spirit and tendency fully comprehended by the community, than it excited an amount of indignation throughout the country, of which it would be difficult to give an exaggerated description. "Tories and democrats," writes Lord Macaulay, "joined in pronouncing the proposed board an unconstitutional body. It was to consist of Fox's nominees. The effect of his bill was to give, not to the Crown, but

to him personally, whether in office or opposition, an enormous power, a patronage sufficient to counterbalance the patronage of the treasury and of the admiralty, and to decide the elections for fifty boroughs. He knew, it was said, that he was hateful alike to king and people ; and he had devised a plan which would make him independent of both." Wilberforce inveighed against the measure to his constituents at York as the offspring of that "unnatural conjunction," the coalition, "marked with the features of both its parents, — bearing token to the violence of the one, and the corruption of the other." Pitt opposed the progress of the measure through the House of Commons with all the eloquence at his command. He admitted, indeed, that reform was required in India, but not a reform, he added, which threatened to break through every principle of equity and justice. Should the bill pass into law, he continued, no public securities whatever — no public corporation — not the Bank of England — not even the Magna Charta itself, would be secure from the innovations of a "ravenous coalition," whose harpy jaws were gaping to swallow a patronage amounting to more than two millions of money sterling. Nor was it in Parliament only, and for party purposes alone, that Pitt denounced his rival's measure as fraught with danger to the Constitution, and as an unjustifiable confiscation of vested property and rights. To the Duke of Rutland he writes on the 22d

of November : "The bill which Fox has brought in relative to India will be, one way or other, decisive for or against the coalition. It is, I really think, the boldest and most unconstitutional measure ever attempted ; transferring, at one stroke, in spite of all charters and compacts, the immense influence and patronage of the East to Charles Fox, in or out of office. I think it will with difficulty, if at all, find its way through our House, and can never succeed in yours." Fox thought otherwise. To Lord Ossory he writes, on the 21st : "I am very confident ; but every vote [in the House of Commons] will tell on account of the House of Lords afterward. If we can beat them, as I hope to do, by a hundred or one hundred and fifty, it will give a most complete blow to the enemy, [from] which they will find it difficult to recover."

It was during the progress of the India Bill through Parliament that Burke delivered one of the most touching, ingenious, and beautiful orations that had ever been listened to in the House of Commons. Fox, too, defended his favourite measure with splendid ability, and accordingly, by the united efforts of these two gifted men, combined with the stanch support which they received from Lord North and his friends, the bill was carried through the House of Commons by 208 votes against 102. The following day, Fox, attended by a large assemblage of members of the lower House, presented the bill in triumph at the bar of the House of Lords.

Previously to recording the fate of the famous India Bill in the House of Lords, it becomes necessary to refer to a young nobleman who, though not in power, exercised at this period no slight influence upon public affairs. George, second Earl Temple, and afterward first Marquis of Buckingham, was the eldest son of the king's old political antagonist, George Grenville, and nephew to Richard, Earl Temple, to whose titles and noble estates he had succeeded in the month of September, 1779. His principal faults are said to have been obstinacy, avarice, overweening pride, and, if Walpole is to be believed, no very nice regard for truth. Though gifted with talents of no very high order, he was, on the other hand, indefatigably industrious and inordinately ambitious. On the formation of the coalition ministry, he had highly gratified the king by throwing up his post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and separating his interests from those of the Duke of Portland and Fox. Since that time he seems to have sedulously applied himself to win the favour and confidence of his sovereign. Arriving in England at the particular time when the king and his ministers were at issue on the subject of the Prince of Wales's establishment, he was immediately admitted to an interview at St. James's, when he entered so warmly into the king's feelings, and subsequently took so active a part against the prince's interests, that the latter was heard to declare he would never forgive him. Now, then,

he was afforded a further, and no less favourable, opportunity of ingratiating himself with his sovereign by opposing the India Bill, to which measure he not only found the king in the highest degree hostile, but incensed beyond measure against his ministers for having brought it under the consideration of Parliament. He never would give his confidence, he told Lord Temple, to such a ministry as the present one. He would take the first opportunity of dismissing them from his service.

It used to be generally imagined that the particular fact of Fox's bill having a tendency to impair the royal authority was for the first time pointed out to the king by Lord Temple, and then, in an interview which took place between them on the 11th of December, four days before that appointed for the second reading of the bill in the House of Lords, —

“On that great day when Buckingham, by pairs,
Ascended, Heaven-impelled, the king's back stairs;
And panting, breathless, strained his lungs to show
From Fox's bill what mighty ills would flow;
Still, as with stammering tongue he told his tale,
Unusual terrors Brunswick's heart assail,
Wide starts his white wig from the royal ear,
And each particular hair stands stiff with fear.”

— *The Rolliad*.

But, however artfully and insidiously the bill may have been drawn up, it is difficult to imagine

that the dangerous consequences with which it threatened the Crown should have escaped the discernment of a monarch at once so shrewd, and so jealous of his prerogative, as George the Third. Moreover, that the king's apprehensions had been aroused at a much earlier period than has been commonly supposed, is proved by a document which exists in Lord Temple's handwriting, in which the bill is spoken of as "a plan to take more than half the royal power," and on which are indorsed the words, "Delivered by Lord Thurlow, December 1, 1783." In furtherance of certain advice contained in that paper, Lord Temple, in his interview with the king on the 11th, was furnished by him with written authority to intimate to such peers as he might think proper, that the king disapproved of the bill, as being unconstitutional and subversive of the rights of the Crown, and further that his Majesty would regard those who voted for it as his enemies. Up to this time, Fox had been tolerably sanguine as to the fate of his measure in the House of Lords, but no sooner was the fact of Lord Temple's commission whispered about, than misgiving, if not despondency, took possession of the ministerial camp.

On the appointed day, the 15th of December, the second reading of the India Bill took place in the House of Lords. There Lord Temple denounced it as an infamous bill, against which he was only too happy to enter his protest, while

Lord Thurlow inveighed against it with all the irony and the eloquence at his command. "As I abhor tyranny in all its shapes," he vehemently exclaimed, "I shall oppose most strenuously this strange attempt to destroy the true balance of our Constitution. I wish to see the crown great and respectable, but if the present bill should pass, it will no longer be worthy of a man of honour to wear. The king, in fact," — and he fixed his eyes pointedly on the Prince of Wales as he spoke, — "will take the diadem from his own head and place it on the head of Mr. Fox."¹ In the course of a subsequent debate the venerable Lord Camden delivered a similar opinion. "Were this bill," he exclaimed, "to pass into law, we should see the King of England and the King of Bengal contending for superiority in the British Parliament."

In the meantime, the king's wishes had been communicated to certain of the lords spiritual and temporal, on whose minds it produced the effect which had been contemplated. "The bishops waver," writes Fitzpatrick the same day to Lord Ossory, "and the thanes fly from us."² The true merits of the bill — the welfare and happi-

¹ Lord Thurlow's words very probably suggested to Doctor Johnson the well-known remark which he made to Boswell, that it had become "a doubt whether the country should be ruled by the sceptre of George the Third or the tongue of Fox."

² Fitzpatrick of course alludes to the idle belief, which, even at this late period, had not entirely died out, in Lord Bute's secret influence with the king.

ness of thirty millions of people—were overlooked in the excitement produced by selfish interests, by party zeal, and officious loyalty. “Instantly,” writes Lord Macaulay, “a troop of lords of the bedchamber, of bishops who wished to be translated, and of Scotch peers who wished to be reëlected, made haste to change sides.” In the meantime, not only had Lord Temple’s share in this delicate transaction become more than suspected, but, when taxed by the Duke of Richmond with complicity, his reply almost amounted to an admission of the fact. It was notorious, he said, that the king had recently honoured him with a conference, and, as an hereditary counsellor of the Crown, he had the privilege of advising his Majesty. “I did,” he added, “give my advice. What it was I shall not now declare; it is lodged in his Majesty’s breast. But though I will not declare what my advice to my sovereign was, I will tell your lordships negatively what it was not. It was not friendly to the principle and object of this bill.” The bill was finally thrown out of the House of Lords by ninety-five votes against seventy-six. The Prince of Wales had voted in favour of the ministry on the second reading of the bill, but was absent from the House at the final division.

The king’s conduct on this occasion, in caballing against his own ministers, has been frequently impugned, nor can it be denied that the defeat

of the obnoxious measure was effected by means which no true friend of the Constitution could thoroughly approve. But the king had unquestionably received great provocation. "If it be ever excusable in a King of England," writes Lord Chancellor Campbell, to cabal against his ministers, George the Third may well be defended for the course he now took; for they had been forced upon him by a factious intrigue, and public opinion was decidedly in his favour." Moreover, it has been argued that Fox and his friends had set the king the example of infringing the canons of the Constitution, by denying him, in the first place, his undoubted right of choosing his own first minister; and secondly by the underhand manner in which they had attempted to diminish the kingly authority by means of the provisions of the India Bill. True it is, that the king had introduced a dangerous precedent by opposing the influence of the Crown to the wishes and votes of a majority of the representatives of the people, as expressed by the recent division on the bill in the House of Commons. In extenuation, however, of this irregular procedure, must be taken into account the notorious facts that the late majority in the Commons had been procured by an unnatural coalition of two hostile factions, and that its verdict was entirely opposed to the known wishes of his subjects. The king, therefore, resolved to appeal, as Fox had appealed before him, from

the representative to the constituent body. Well might he have addressed to Fox the words which George the Second had formerly addressed to the elder Pitt: "Sir, you have taught me to look for the sense of my people in other places than the House of Commons."

In the meantime, the king had been waiting with great impatience the result of the division in the House of Lords. On the morning after it had taken place, although he was present at the usual "meet" of the royal staghounds, not only was his mind obviously distracted from the amusement of the day, but when the hounds threw off, he continued to linger behind, as if momentarily expecting the arrival of important intelligence. At length, according to the account of Sir Andrew Hammond, who was present, a horseman was seen approaching, who, having ridden up to him and presented him with a letter, the king eagerly broke open the seal, rapidly glanced over the contents of the packet, and then throwing his arms wide open, emphatically exclaimed: "Thank God! it is all over; the House has thrown out the bill, so there is an end of Mr. Fox." "I have heard the king speak of him [Fox]," writes Sir Andrew Hammond, two years afterward, "with that indignation that I really believe he would rather sacrifice everything than allow him to come forward." The excitement of the day, however, was not yet at an

end. The king had hoped and expected that ministers would have immediately resigned their appointments, and accordingly, when night closed in, and their resignations failed to arrive, messengers were despatched by his orders to the two secretaries of state, Lord North and Fox, conveying his commands to them to transmit at once their seals of office to the palace through their respective under secretaries. It was one o'clock in the morning, and Lord North had retired to rest with Lady North, when the under secretary of state for the Home Office, Sir Evan Nepean, knocked at his bedchamber door and desired to see him on most important business. "Then," said the discarded minister, "you must see Lady North too;" at the same time intimating his determination not to get out of bed. Sir Evan Nepean having accordingly been admitted and declared his errand, Lord North delivered to him the key of the closet in which the seals of office were kept, and then quietly turned around to sleep again. At the same time, the other ministers received their dismissals by letter signed Temple.

On the following day, the new Cabinet, with Pitt at the head of it, was formed with the full approval of the king. That day Mr. Pepper Arden, a personal friend of Pitt, and a young barrister like himself, moved in an excited House of Commons that a new writ be issued for the

borough of Appleby, in the room of the Right Honourable William Pitt, who had accepted the offices of first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer. Thus did this remarkable man — whom, scarcely forty-eight hours previously, Fox had denounced as “a boy without judgment, experience, or knowledge of the world” — become at the age of twenty-four Prime Minister of England! So overwhelming, it may be mentioned, was the majority of votes which Lord North and Fox were notoriously able to array against him, and consequently so contemptible appeared to be his chances of establishing himself in power, that Pepper Arden’s announcement was responded to from the crowded benches of the coalition with a shout of derision. Yet, on that day, with Pitt for its chief, commenced an administration which was destined to be one of the longest in the annals of our country.

In addition to Pitt as first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, the members of the new Cabinet consisted of the Marquis of Carmarthen and Earl Temple as secretaries of state; of Earl Gower as president of the Council; the Duke of Rutland as privy seal; Earl Howe as first lord of the admiralty, and Lord Thurlow as lord chancellor. The Duke of Richmond, notwithstanding his former close political connection with the Rockingham Whigs, and the grounds for complaint which he imagined he had against the

king, accepted the office of master of the horse, though without a seat in the Cabinet.

There is, perhaps, no narrative in biographical literature more interesting than that of the gallant, persevering, and successful struggle, against almost insuperable difficulties, which preceded the rise of the younger Pitt to power. If anything could add to the interest of that struggle, we must search for it in the story of his personal rivalry with Fox, and also in those marked differences in their several characters and conduct which led to the one achieving power almost in boyhood, and to the other being excluded from it nearly all his life. As regards Fox, if powerful aristocratic connection, if brilliant eloquence and administrative abilities of a high order, if a thorough knowledge of the House of Commons and fifteen years' experience of public affairs, if, independent of good moral conduct, an ardent love of his country and a thorough detestation of tyranny, be deemed qualities of sufficient consideration to justify a statesman in aspiring to fill the highest office in the state, then had Fox a prior and superior claim to the premiership than that of his younger rival. But, in the eyes of the king and of the majority of the public, the purity of Pitt's private life, combined with the lofty political rectitude of which he had afforded proof, amply made amends for the disadvantages of youth and a comparatively brief apprenticeship

in politics. In respect to the personal rivalry between Pitt and Fox, there were many circumstances which invested it with a peculiar interest. Their fathers had been political antagonists before them. Each of them was a younger son, and had been the favourite son of his father. Each of those fathers had not only taken a deep pride in the precocious talents of his offspring, but had carefully prepared him to shine in the great political arena in which he himself had been distinguished. There were even traits in the characters of the sons in which they resembled each other. Both shrank from mounting, by grovelling means, to power; both were constitutionally intrepid; both were, comparatively speaking, poor; both recoiled from enriching themselves by the spoils of office.

The education of Pitt had been very differently conducted from that of Fox. Fox had been educated at a public school. Pitt had been privately brought up at home, under the immediate eye of the illustrious Chatham. Years afterward, when William Pitt had become prime minister, it used to be a favourite taunt of the wits at Brooks's that he had been "taught by his dad on a stool." That home, however, had been the resort of the Muses, and of all the domestic virtues. "When his lordship's health would permit," writes Bishop Tomline, "he never suffered a day to pass without giving instruction of some sort to the children,

and seldom without reading a chapter of the Bible with them." ¹ Lord Chatham was not only proud of his son's abilities, but had early discovered the boy's precocious ambition, which he missed no opportunity of disciplining to wise and noble ends. The great object of his life was to train up his son to rival him as an orator and statesman, with which view he encouraged the boy to speak on all occasions without reserve, at the same time sparing no pains to teach him to express his thoughts with terseness, and to reply with readiness. For the purpose of improving his naturally clear and deep-toned voice he caused him to recite the noblest passages of Shakespeare and Milton. Pitt's friends, after his death, used to mention the delight with which they had heard him recite his favourite passage in Milton, the grand speech of Belial in Pandemonium, in the second book of "Paradise Lost." The earl, as a further means of disciplining his son to speak with fluency, especially encouraged classical dramatic representations among his children. To his friend Hollis he writes, on the 21st of October, 1772: "Our young people are flattered and alarmed with the thought of exhibiting to Mr. Hollis their puerile powers of the scene. Bold is the attempt, but papa and mamma, who not undelighted rock this cradle of tragedy, exhort them to

¹ The bishop informs us that he had frequent opportunities of observing Mr. Pitt's accurate knowledge of the Bible.

dismiss their fears." Again, the great earl writes, on the 26th of November following: "The large approbation he [Hollis] is so good to express of the novitiate of the small tragedians could not but touch sensibly, and powerfully animate, the various parties concerned in a picture drawn in the spirit of Athens or Rome, and which would have been flattering, wherever applied, in either. Old and young all beg to offer their united grateful acknowledgments for sentiments so partial." On one occasion we find Lord Shelburne a spectator of one of these juvenile performances. "Our youthful aspirers to honest fame," writes Lord Chatham to him, on the 22d of January, 1773, "are, as I wished to see them, excessively vain of the applause with which you honour them." One of the results of Lord Chatham's encouragement of these histrionic performances was the production by the future minister of a tragedy in five acts, entitled "*Laurentius, King of Clarinium*," the manuscript of which is still preserved at Earl Stanhope's seat at Chevening. Lord Macaulay has defined it as "bad, of course," but not worse than the tragedies of Hayley.

Fortunately, the great statesman found his son an apt pupil. At the University of Cambridge, where he was entered at Pembroke Hall at the age of fourteen, young Pitt became a model of industry and exemplary conduct. According to his tutor,

Bishop Tomline, though he was cheerful, and even playful in his intercourse with those whose society he preferred, he "steadily avoided every species of irregularity." As an undergraduate, he regularly dined in the public hall ; never failed, unless prevented by illness, attending chapel morning and evening, and, on no single occasion, ever spent an evening out of the college walls. Probably no undergraduate in the university devoted himself more closely to study. He obtained a profound knowledge of the ancient languages of Greece and Rome ; the orations of antiquity were his constant and favourite reading ; Newton's Principia seem to have been more agreeable to him than a novel of Fielding's ; mathematics are said to have been almost his passion.

Very different had been the youth and education of Charles James Fox. His father, Lord Holland, witty and social himself, appears to have spoiled, almost as much as he idolised, his sprightly and intelligent offspring. The little, indeed, which we know of Fox's childhood is almost entirely derived from his father's letters. He was scarcely more than three years old when we find Lord Holland postponing some important business for the purpose of enjoying a tête-à-tête dinner with his engaging child. On the following day, he writes to Lady Holland that he grows "immoderately fond" of Charles ; and again, four years afterward, writes, Charles is "all life, motion, and

good humour.”¹ Lord Holland, like Lord Chat-ham, encouraged dramatic representations in his family. On one occasion, indeed, we find him expressing an apprehension that Charles is “stage-mad,” an apprehension, however, which he qualifies with the consolatory reflection that “it makes him read a good deal.” “Charles is dreadfully passionate,” one day complained Lady Holland to her husband; “what shall we do with him?” “Never mind!” was the reply of the easy father; “he is a very sensible little fellow, and will learn to cure himself.” Fox himself, in after times, used to relate this anecdote, with a not un instructive comment. “I will not deny,” he said, “that I was a very sensible little boy; a very clever little boy; and what I heard made an impression on me,

¹ Mrs. George Anne Bellamy, in her “Apology for her Life,” relates the following anecdote in reference to Lord Holland’s indulgence of his favourite child: “The wall at the bottom of the lawn before Holland House being to be taken down, and iron palisades put up in its room, that the passengers on the road might have a better view of that fine antique building, it was necessary to make use of gunpowder to precipitate the work. Mr. Fox had promised Master Charles that he should be present when the explosion took place. But finding the workmen had completed the fall of the wall without giving him notice, he ordered it to be rebuilt; and when it was thoroughly cemented, had it blown up again, in order to keep his word with his son. He at the same time recommended it to those about him, never, on any account, to be guilty of a breach of promise to children, as by doing so they instilled into them an indifference with regard to the observance of their own promises, when they arrived at years of maturity.”

and was of use to me afterward." The stately Chatham would scarcely have forgiven forwardness in one of his children, yet Lord Holland saw in it no drawback to parental partiality. "I found Charles," he writes in one of his letters, "very well, very pert, and very argumentative." At a later period he writes to Lady Holland: "Is Charles my sensible child still?"

At the age of nine years, Fox was transferred from a private school at Wandsworth to Eton, where he is said to have been assisted in his studies by the Rev. Philip Francis,¹ the translator of Horace, and the father of Sir Philip Francis. Had Fox been treated at Eton as other boys were treated; had he been left to fight his way in the ordinary course with his tutors and his schoolfellows, much mischief, as regards his future conduct and success in life, might very possibly have been prevented. But his fond and indul-

¹ As Francis was never a master of Eton, this is not very clear; unless, indeed, he may, at some time or other, have been Fox's private tutor at Eton. Francis, it seems, was introduced to Lord Holland by the beautiful and charming actress, Mrs. Bellamy, who, on the night of the signal failure of the poet's tragedy, "Constantine," at Covent Garden, in 1754, carried him home with her to meet Lord Holland at supper, in hopes that the powerful statesman might be induced to extend his protection to talent in distress. Lord Holland good-naturedly took Francis by the hand. "Well, doctor!" he said, "who knows but your damnation as a playwright may be the means of your promotion as a divine?" Francis took the hint, and attached himself to his new patron.

gent father continued to spoil him as boys in public schools are seldom spoiled. Frequently we find Lord Holland interrupting his son's studies by sending for him from Eton, and carrying him to various places of amusement. "Whenever," he writes to Lady Holland, "you think London or Holland House better for Charles than Eton, be assured I shall like it." Thus, we find him a spectator, as a boy, at the coronation of George the Third, and a listener to the debates in the House of Commons on Wilkes's famous libel, No. 45 of the *North Briton*. In the witty and fashionable society of Holland House he seems at a very early age to have been regarded as a prodigy. "Commend me to your son Charles for his sagacity," are the words of a grave statesman, the Duke of Devonshire, in one of his letters to Lord Holland. The future rival of Pitt was fourteen years of age when his father carried him to Paris and afterward to Spa, at which latter place he is said to have supplied him with money to throw away at the gaming-table, thus encouraging in him that unfortunate passion for high play which afterward proved the bane of his existence. On this occasion we find him absent four months from Eton, whither he returned under somewhat ignominious circumstances. "He was quizzed," we are told, "by the boys; rallied by Docter Barnard, the head master, and actually flogged while fresh from the brilliant society he had just quitted."

At the age of fifteen Fox was entered at Hertford College, Oxford, where he remained about a year and a half. At the age of nineteen he was returned for Midhurst to the Parliament which assembled on the 10th of May, 1768. Much of his time during the years 1766 and 1768 was spent in France and Italy, in both of which countries his habits of dissipation and extravagance were such as would probably have broken the heart of any other father but Lord Holland. At Paris his losses at play were enormous; at Naples he is said to have contracted debts to the amount of sixteen thousand pounds. In 1770, at the age of twenty-one, we find him immersed in the high play which was then the fashion at the London clubs; play so high that Lord Stavordale,¹ a youth under age, is mentioned as winning eleven thousand pounds by a single hand at hazard. "His cousin, Charles Fox," writes Walpole, "shines equally there and in the House of Commons. He was twenty-one yesterday se'night, and is already one of our best speakers." During the year 1772 we discover continued evidences of Fox's reckless extravagance and dissipation. "Lord Holland," writes Walpole, in February, "has paid above twenty thousand pounds for his two sons." His father's liberality, however, seems to have drawn forth neither gratitude nor amendment. Imme-

¹ Henry Thomas Strangways, afterward second Earl of Ilchester, died 5 September, 1802.

diately afterward, Gibbon, the historian, describes him as preparing himself for a solemn discussion in the House of Commons by spending twenty-two previous hours at the hazard-table. "His devotions," writes Gibbon, "cost him only about five hundred per hour,—in all, eleven thousand pounds." On the 9th of April, Walpole heard him speak in the House of Commons, and heard him with admiration. "Fox's abilities," he writes to Sir Horace Mann, "are amazing at so very early a period, especially under the circumstances of such a dissolute life. He was just arrived from Newmarket, had sat up drinking all night, and had not been in bed. How such talents make one laugh at Tully's rules for an orator! His laboured orations are puerile in comparison with this boy's manly reason!" Again, on the 22d of June, Walpole writes to Conway: "I do not think that I can find in Patin or Plato, nay, nor in Aristotle, though he wrote about everything, a parallel case to Charles Fox. There are advertised to be sold more annuities of his and his society; to the amount of five hundred thousand pounds a year. I wonder what he will do next, when he has sold the estates of all his friends." His friend, Lord Carlisle, alone became security for him for between fifteen and sixteen thousand pounds. "Lord Holland is dying," writes Walpole, on the 28th of November, 1773; "is paying Charles Fox's debts, or most of them, for they

amount to one hundred and thirty thousand pounds." Again Walpole writes, on the 21st of the following month: "Charles Fox — the type, the archetype of the century — is just relaxed by his father from part of his debts. Lord Holland has paid an hundred thousand pounds more for him, and not above half as much remains unpaid."

"But, hark! the voice of battle shouts from far;
The Jews and macaronis are at war;
The Jews prevail, and thundering from the stocks,
They seize, they bind, they circumcise Charles Fox."
— *Mason's "Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers."*

Still, amidst all his difficulties, Fox's equanimity and sweetness of temper rarely forsook him. His anteroom, in which he received the Jews, he used to style his "Jerusalem Chamber." Of his elder brother, Stephen, afterward Lord Holland, who was unusually fat, he remarked that he had much the advantage of him, for he could afford to give the Shylocks pounds of flesh for their guineas. On one occasion, after having lost an almost ruinous amount of money at play, Topham Beauclerk called upon him in the course of the following morning, expecting to find him in the deepest state of despondency. On the contrary, he found him complacently reading Herodotus in the original Greek. On Beauclerk expressing some surprise at finding him thus employed, "What,"

said Fox, "would you have a man do when he has lost his last shilling?"

Thus did this extraordinary man throw away his priceless time, and misemploy his splendid abilities! Having wasted his own means, and ruined half his friends, we find him frequently in want of a guinea to supply the exigencies of the hour. Even the waiters at the clubs are said to have become his creditors for insignificant sums, and the chairmen in St. James's Street to have been in the habit of importuning him for the payment of their paltry fares. "While," writes Walpole, "there is a broker or a gamester upon the face of the earth, Charles will not be out of debt." His friends, on one occasion, raised a large subscription for him among themselves, when one of them happening to observe that it would require some delicacy in introducing the subject to him, and wondering how he would take it, "Take it!" interrupted Selwyn, "why, quarterly, to be sure." Yet, notwithstanding the difficulties in which he had involved most of his friends as well as himself, those very friends continued almost to worship him. The brilliant reputation which he had achieved for himself; his delightful powers of conversation; the amiable desire which he ever showed in society to bring out the powers of the diffident; the simplicity of his manners; the affectionate frankness of his address; his strong sense of justice; his almost

feminine tenderness of heart ; his superiority to all the low, dirty vices of human nature, such as malice, affectation, parade, dogmatism, and deceit, atoned, in the partial opinion of his friends, for a multitude of follies and errors. "To be sure," said Burke of him, "he is a man made to be loved." "It would, indeed, be very extraordinary," writes his schoolfellow and friend, Lord Carlisle, "if his heart and understanding had not seduced every one who knew him into an unjustifiable partiality." "I believe," writes the same constant friend, "there never was a person yet created who had the faculty of reasoning like him. His judgments are never wrong. His decision is formed quicker than any man I ever conversed with, and he never seems to mistake but in his own affairs." According to Lord Carlisle, much of Fox's dissipation was caused by his desire to bury in temporary oblivion the melancholy recollections of lost time, of squandered means, and wasted talents.

Not that we are to conclude that Fox was at all times the mere man of pleasure, nor that he was indebted to nature only, unassisted by diligence and study, for his brilliant success as an orator and a statesman. No such prodigy ever existed. His father had early impressed on his mind the value of knowledge, and the necessity of application. He is said to have been a diligent scholar while at Eton, where he laid the foundation of that

taste for, and thorough knowledge of, the literature of Greece and Rome, which he retained to the close of his existence. Though the study of the French language was almost entirely repudiated at Eton, we find him, at the age of fifteen, composing verses in French. "Few Englishmen," writes his nephew, Lord Holland, "have ever spoken or written that language with more care and correctness." While still a boy, he had taken advantage of his visiting Italy to make himself master of the Italian language, of which he tells us that he "grew immoderately fond, particularly of the poetry." The letters which he addressed to his friend Fitzpatrick, in his youth, were written chiefly in Italian. Pitt, on the contrary, was acquainted with no modern language but French, of which he is said to have had only a very imperfect knowledge. At Oxford, as Fox himself tells us, he "read a great deal;" indeed, during a part of the time that he remained at the university he applied himself so closely to his studies, that his tutor, Doctor Newcome, afterward Primate of Ireland, was obliged to abridge his labours. "Application like yours," he writes to him, "requires some intermission, and you are the only person with whom I have ever had connection, to whom I could say this." Toward the close of his life, Fox used to carry about his old tutor's letter in his pocketbook; displaying it in playful triumph to his friends, when they taxed him with idleness or waste

of time. Like Pitt, he was "very fond of mathematics," and, in after life, used to regret that he had not more assiduously made them his study. Lord Holland, like Lord Chatham, had trained up his favourite son to figure as a public speaker, and it was apparently with this view that he encouraged private theatrical representations at Holland House. In tragedy Fox is said to have been successful, but in comedy was compelled to yield the palm to his friend, Fitzpatrick.¹ "I think," writes the late Mr. Allen, "I have heard Mr. Fox say that there was no play extant, written and published before the Restoration, that he had not read attentively."

It was certainly much to Fox's credit that, amidst all his excesses, his love of literature remained lasting and pure. Over and over again he might have exclaimed, in the fine words of Lord Bolingbroke, "The love of study and a desire of knowledge I have felt all my life ; but my genius, unlike the demon of Socrates, whispered so softly,

¹ While still at Eton, Fox's future success as an orator was prognosticated by his friends :

"How will, my Fox, alone, thy strength of parts
Shake the loud Senate, animate the hearts
Of fearful statesmen ! while around you stand
Both peers and Commons listening your command !
While Tully's sense its weight to you affords,
His nervous sweetness shall adorn your words.
What praise to Pitt, to Townshend, e'er was due,
In future times, my Fox, shall wait on you."

that very often I heard him not, in the hurry of those passions with which I was transported. Some calmer hours there were; in those I hearkened to him. Reflection had often its turn, and the love of study and the desire of knowledge have never quite abandoned me." Dissipated as was Fox's life, there must have been many intervals which he devoted to study. To the end of his days literature was his passion. Whatever task he undertook, he aimed at excellence. He once spoke of himself, doubtless to the surprise of his hearers, as "a very painstaking man." The fact is a remarkable one, that after he had become secretary of state, in 1782, he placed himself under a writing-master, and submitted to write out copies like a schoolboy.

In the autumn of 1774, when Fox was in his twenty-sixth year, we find him temporarily relieved from his pecuniary embarrassments by the death of his mother, Lady Holland.¹ From this period

¹ Horace Walpole, referring to the death of Lady Holland, writes to Lady Ossory, on the 30th of July, 1774: "Charles Fox will be entirely cleared; have his place and £200 a year, and £10,000; a pretty beginning for a younger brother; for Julius Cæsar not a breakfast." Again, Walpole writes to Sir Horace Mann, on the 3d of August: "Lady Holland is dead, — just three weeks after her lord. She has cleared all the debts of her two eldest sons. The eldest has a large fortune, and Charles a decent beginning of another, though it may not last a night." Lady Holland survived her husband only twenty-three days, and on the 26th of December following died their eldest son, Stephen Fox, who, six months previously, had succeeded his father as

he seems to have gambled away less ruinous sums than formerly, although dissipation still continued to be his bane. "Mr. Fox," writes Walpole to Sir Horace Mann on the 17th of May, 1781, "is the first figure in all the places I have mentioned; the hero in Parliament, at the gaming-table, at Newmarket. Last week he passed twenty-four hours without interruption at all three, and ill the whole time." It was these notorious irregularities, as has already been pointed out, which, on Pitt's making his appearance in public life, gave the latter so great an advantage over his elder rival. The world, in discussing their several characters and claims to public confidence, naturally drew a comparison unfavourable to Fox. They beheld in him a man of broken fortunes and ruined reputation, associating with the "most dissolute characters," and, by his immoralities, openly setting public opinion at defiance. Pitt, on the other hand, stood before them, not only himself a model of youthful purity, but attracting to his standard the sober and rising young politicians of the day, who almost worshipped him on account of his genius and his virtues. Fox, no less than Pitt, was undoubtedly actuated in his public conduct by an honourable ambition; but with Pitt ambition was an all-absorbing passion, while with Fox it was

second Lord Holland. By his death Charles Fox succeeded to the tenure of the lucrative place of clerk of the pells in Ireland.

made subservient to the pursuit of pleasure. Pitt was all industry and application ; while Fox, on the other hand, trusted partly to his natural abilities, and partly to the stock of knowledge which he had already stored up, to procure him victory over his opponents. Thus it was, then, that Pitt raised himself to a power which he succeeded in retaining for seventeen years, while Fox, during the whole of his political career, held office scarcely more than as many months. George Selwyn wittily compared them to the industrious and idle apprentices in Hogarth's prints. "Charles," said his friend Boothby, at a later period, "has three passions — women, play, and politics. Yet he never formed a creditable connection with a woman in his life ; he has squandered all his means at the gaming-table ; and, with the exception of eleven months, he has invariably been in opposition."

CHAPTER II.

Abrupt Withdrawal of Earl Temple from the Pitt Administration — Instance of Pitt's Disinterestedness — Difficulties of the New Ministry — Frequent Defeats of the Government in the House of Commons — The Commons Petition for Pitt's Removal — The King in Favour of a Dissolution of Parliament — The Cabinet, under Pitt's Guidance, Decide against Dissolution — Violent Party Attacks on the King by Fox and Other Ex-Ministers — The King's Health again Impaired — The House of Lords Censure the Proceedings of the Commons — Decline of Fox's Influence — Numerous Addresses of Sympathy Sent to the King — Enthusiastic Reception of Pitt in the City — Brutal Attack on Pitt in Passing Brooks's Club — Dissolution of Parliament — Fox nearly Ousted for Westminster — Majority for Government in the House of Commons — Splendid Position of Pitt — Letters of the King to Viscount Howe and General Conway.

PITT had been scarcely forty-eight hours in office when a blow was dealt him from an unexpected quarter, which threatened to prove fatal to his infant administration. On the 19th of December Earl Temple had accepted the seals as secretary of state. On the 21st he suddenly resigned them. "I lose no time," writes Fox to Lord Northington, "in sending you the intelligence, because it may prevent measures you would otherwise be taking. The confusion of the

enemy is beyond all description, and the triumph of our friends proportionable." The defection of so near a relative, and of so powerful an ally, as Lord Temple, was to Pitt a source of the deepest distress and mortification. When, early on the following morning, Bishop Tomline visited him and was admitted to his bedside, he was told by him that he had passed the night without enjoying a moment's sleep. "This," says the bishop, "was the only event of a public nature which I ever knew disturb Mr. Pitt's rest while he continued in good health."

Lord Temple's precipitate resignation of the seals, at so critical a period, appears to have been pretty generally attributed by his contemporaries to a difference of opinion between him and Pitt on the policy of dissolving Parliament. Temple advocated immediate dissolution. Pitt was resolutely bent on delay. Other causes, however, — such as disgust at having been refused a step in the peerage as a recognition of his recent services in Ireland, disappointment at not having been placed at the head of the treasury,¹ and possibly jealousy of his cousin, Pitt, — may not improbably have, more or less, had their share in influencing the conduct of this impracticable and imperious grandee. That he both aspired to a

¹ That Temple was encouraged by his friends to aspire to the premiership, and also that both Fox and Lord North considered his elevation to that high post a very probable event, is certain.

dukedom, and imagined that his claims had been unduly overlooked, there is ample evidence to show. For instance, on the formation of the coalition ministry, we find him preferring formal complaints of neglect both to the Duke of Portland and Lord North, nor, indeed, had the earl allowed Pitt to remain many hours prime minister, before he commenced importuning him for some "mark of the king's approbation of his conduct," and treating his having been passed over as a "personal offence." Pitt, it seems, would willingly have compromised the matter by advising the king to confer a peerage on the earl's second son, but this was indignantly rejected by his testy kinsman.¹ Possibly, too, it may not have been without feelings of irritation, if not envy, that Temple beheld the splendid advancement of a subaltern relative, who was not only his junior in years, but so infinitely his inferior in rank and aristocratic consequence. Temple never seems to have loved, and not improbably may have disliked, his illustrious cousin. There had certainly been a time when the favour and countenance of the powerful lord of Stow might have been of service to the young law-

¹ If it be the case that personal pique and disappointment were the occasions of Lord Temple's resigning the seals, he had at least a precedent in the example of his uncle, Richard, Earl Temple, who, a quarter of a century previously, had flung up the office of privy seal, on the Garter having been withheld from him by the Duke of Newcastle.

student entering upon life, but the rays of kindness had apparently never flowed to Pitt from that quarter. It was not, indeed, till his genius was rapidly bearing him to the highest point of political greatness, that he seems, for the first time, to have been a guest at the classical seat of his powerful kinsman. To his mother, Lady Chatham, he writes, on the 22d of July, 1783: "My excursion to Stow was a very short one; the pleasantest, however, that could be. I found more beauties in the place than I expected; and the house, though not half finished in the inside, the most magnificent by far that I ever saw. Still, as far as the mere pleasure of seeing goes, I had rather be the visitor than the owner."

We have seen how great was Pitt's distress at the resignation of Lord Temple, yet it has been questioned whether the defection of that nobleman was not, after all, the occasion of strength, rather than of weakness, to the administration. In the opinion of the public, it had been with no very clean hands that the earl had emerged from the underground operations by which he had succeeded in undermining the coalition ministry, and consequently his continuance in office might, by entailing a certain amount of odium on the new administration, have occasioned considerable embarrassment to Pitt. Whatever may have been the motives, however, which influenced the conduct of Lord Temple at this time, Pitt, at least,

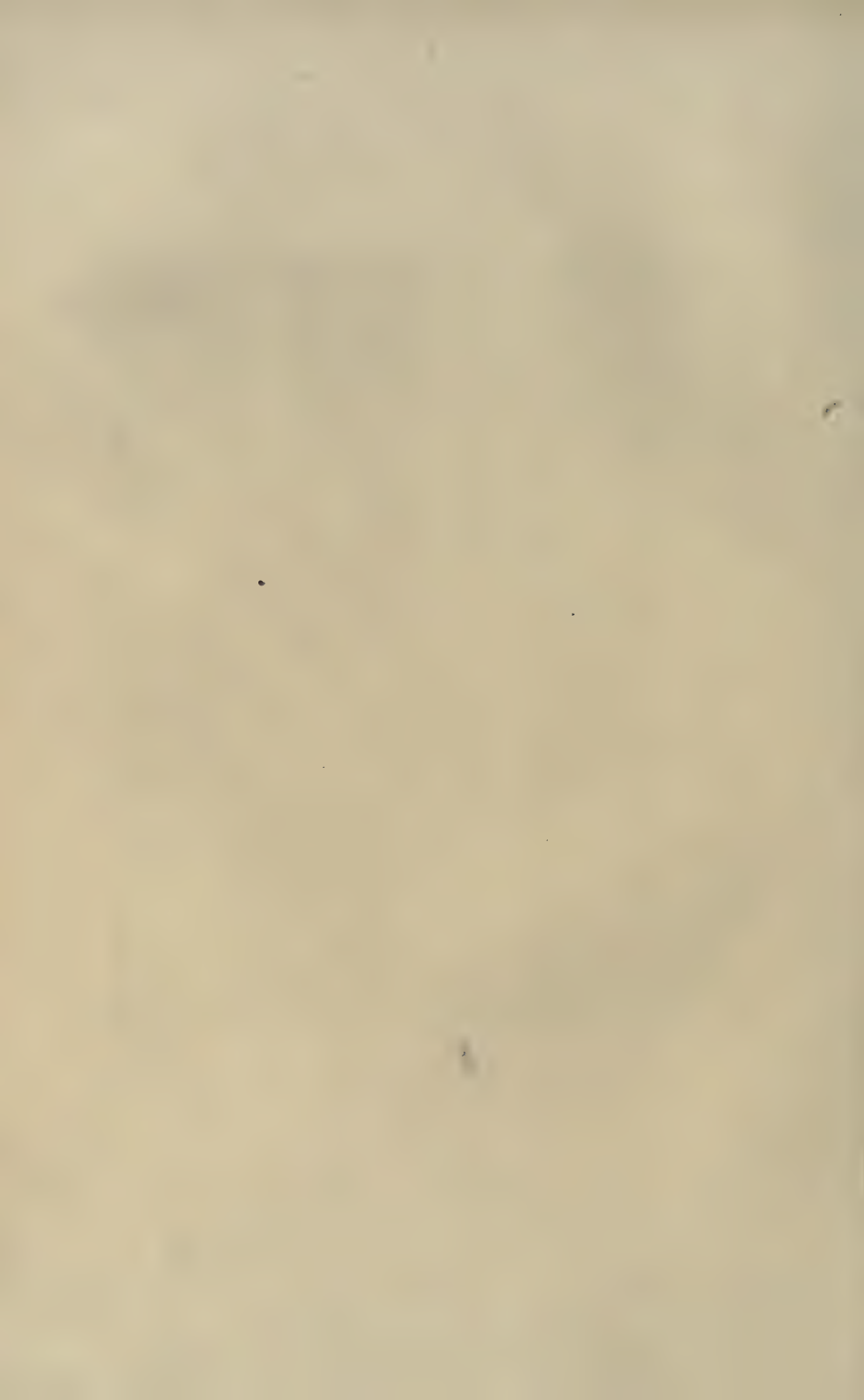
was very soon afforded an opportunity of proving how disinterested were his own considerations. He had been only a few days in power, when the death of Sir Edward Walpole placed at his disposal the sinecure appointment of clerk of the pells, to which was attached a salary of three thousand a year.¹ Every one expected that he would have appropriated the place to himself. Certainly, the public would not have blamed him had he done so, nor probably would even the bitterest of his political opponents have impugned his conduct in Parliament. Lord North, for instance, though far from having been a rapacious minister, had made no scruple of bestowing similar fortunate windfalls upon his own relations; nor could Fox well have called his rival to account, considering that he himself enjoyed the like lucrative post of clerk of the pells in Ireland. Moreover, Pitt had the strongest personal motives for appropriating to himself the vacant office. By doing so, he would have secured for himself that which Gibbon, in his "Memoirs," styles "the first of earthly blessings, independence," whereas, situated as he now was, a single hostile vote in

¹ Such is the amount of salary as represented by Lord Stanhope and by Lord Macaulay, but the net salary and emoluments must have reached a much larger sum. By a return which was presented to the House of Commons on the 11th of February, 1782, it appears that the clear and actual receipts were no less than £7,597 12s. $\frac{1}{2}$ d. There were probably, however, very considerable expenses to be paid out of this sum.



Frederick North, Earl of Guilford.
Photo etching after the painting by Daner.





Parliament might at any moment reassign him to his old chambers in Lincoln's Inn, to his slender income of three hundred a year, and the precarious profits of the Western Circuit. Despite, however, the advice and remonstrances of his friends, he not only resisted the temptation, but by handing over the appointment and its emoluments to Colonel Barré, relieved the country from the expense of the scandalous pension which had been granted to the latter by the Rockingham administration. Disinterestedness so uncommon was doubtless sneered at by the wits and dandies of Brooks's, but he had his reward in the applause and confidence of his fellow subjects. "Sir," said Barré to Bishop Tomline, "it is the act of a man who stands upon a high eminence in the eyes of that country which he is determined to govern." Pitt's conduct in rejecting the clerkship of the pells was also highly extolled by Thurlow in the House of Lords. That post, he said, "I was shabby enough to advise him to accept, and certainly should, under his circumstances, have been shabby enough myself to have accepted."

The difficulties with which Pitt at the outset of his administration found himself beset were such as would probably have induced any other minister to retire in despair from the helm of government. To his great mortification, his father's former colleague, the Duke of Grafton,

declined the post of privy seal, while a far more intimate associate of his father, Lord Camden, refused the presidency of the Council. In the House of Commons, the votes of the united parties of Fox and Lord North considerably outnumbered his own. He had to contend—and to contend almost alone—not only against men of eloquence, wit, and tried administrative abilities, such as Burke, North, and Sheridan, but against the transcendent genius of Fox, a statesman who, to adopt the words of Gibbon, “had proved himself in the conduct of a party equal to the conduct of an empire.” On the very first day on which Pitt appeared in the House of Commons after his reëlection for Appleby, he had the mortification to find himself defeated on five successive motions, and left in two minorities of thirty-nine and fifty-four. He had expected no mercy from his political opponents, and he met with none. They scarcely allowed him even breathing time. They affected to regard him in the light of a conceited, inexperienced boy, and ridiculed his prospects of establishing himself in power as an “unparalleled delusion.” Day after day he found himself exposed to a pitiless storm of sarcasm, threats, and invective. Altogether, between the 17th of December, 1783, and the 8th of March, 1784, the opposition triumphed in the House of Commons on sixteen occasions. Even to Pitt himself so hopeless at one time appeared

to be his chances of ultimate success, that it was only in obedience to the earnest entreaties of his sovereign that he was induced to prolong the struggle. "If you resign, Mr. Pitt," the king is reported to have said to him, "I must resign, too."

By his friends, also, as well as by his enemies, the game would seem to have been regarded as desperate. "Depend upon it," said Gibbon, "Billy's painted galley must soon sink under Charles's black collier." Fox himself wrote to Lord Northington, who was still discharging the duties of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, "not to quit his house nor dismiss a single servant."¹

Still Pitt continued gallantly to struggle on and, in due time, with improved prospects of success. More than once the House of Commons went to the length of petitioning the king to dismiss him from his councils, but to no purpose. Throughout the memorable contest he displayed not only abilities of the highest order, but a prudence, a courage, a self-command, and a presence of mind which secured for him almost universal admiration. To the support of his sovereign, to the good sense of the nation, and to his own personal resources,

¹ "Mr. Pitt's late checks," writes Walpole, on the 5th of December, "may be of use to him, and teach him to appreciate his strength better, or to wait till it is confirmed. Had he listed under Mr. Fox, who loved and courted him, he would not only have discovered modesty, but have been more likely to succeed him, than by commencing his competitor."

he began to look up for the means of eventually achieving the triumph which his efforts and his patriotism so richly deserved.

It was the opinion of Lord Thurlow, as well as that of Lord Temple, that Pitt should at once have appealed to the sense and suffrages of the people by dissolving Parliament. Of the same opinion was the king. "I own," he writes to Pitt on the 24th of January, "I cannot see the reason, if the thing is practicable, that a dissolution should not be effected: if not, I fear the Constitution of this country cannot subsist." Pitt, on the other hand, was convinced that the longer the public were allowed time for reflection, the more inclined they would be to declare in favour of prerogative, and against the pretensions of the coalition. The king, however, as will be seen, continued to differ with him on the subject.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

(Extract.)

"Jan. 24, 1784, ^m₂₅ p^t 6 P. M.

"I desire Mr. Pitt will assemble the confidential ministers this evening, that he may state what has passed this day. I should think he cannot give any reason for preventing a dissolution on Monday; but, if he should, he must be armed with the opinion of the other ministers."

Fortunately, Pitt gained his point in the Cabinet, the final result subsequently proving how wise had been his judgment.

In the meantime, the late ministers had scarcely received their dismissal before they revived their former personal attacks upon the king; thus incensing him, more than ever, against what he styles "a desperate faction," which, in his opinion, and to use his own words, threatened "to complete the ruin of the most perfect of all human formations, the British Constitution." Well indeed may the king have been provoked, when we find Lord Surrey carrying, by a large majority in the House of Commons, a motion in which the king was almost directly charged with having permitted "his sacred name to be unconstitutionally used in order to affect the deliberations of Parliament." But, as might be anticipated, it was Fox whose language was the boldest and the most calculated to give offence to his sovereign. He was still in office; still secretary of state; still speaking in front of the treasury benches, when, on the 17th of December, he vented a tirade against the king, which was not the less insulting that it was guardedly couched in language of pretended deference and respect. He not only represented him as being surrounded by a set of mercenary janissaries, who, at the bidding of their master, were prepared to strangle, not indeed men but measures; but, indirectly drawing a parallel between

him and the Emperor Tiberius, he likened the royal document, which had been Lord Temple's authority for canvassing the lords against the India Bill, to the perfidious rescript which that emperor had sent to the Roman senate, inciting them to despatch Sejanus without a trial, and without requiring evidence of his guilt.

“ . . . quo cecidit sub crimine ? quisnam
Delator ? quibus indiciis ? quo teste probavit ?
Nil horum : verhosa et grandis epistola venit
A Capreis — bene habet ; nil plus interrogo.”

— *Juvenal*, Sat x. v. 69–72.

Such continued provocations, on the part of Fox and his friends, could scarcely fail to augment the distress with which the king hourly contemplated the probability of his being compelled to receive them back as his ministers. To Pitt he writes on the 13th of January : “ I am ready to take any step that may be proposed to oppose this faction, and to struggle to the last period of my life ; but I can never submit to throw myself into its power. If they in the end succeed, my line is a clear one, to which I have fortitude enough to submit.” Again the king writes to Pitt on the 15th of February : “ Mr. Pitt is so well apprised of the mortification I feel at any possibility of ever again seeing the heads of opposition in public employments — and more particularly Mr. Fox, whose conduct has not been more marked against my

station in the empire than against my person — that he [Mr. Pitt] must attribute my want of perspicuity, in my conversation last night, to that foundation." To the king, the present doubtful contest between Pitt and Fox was tantamount, in interest and importance, to a struggle between life and death. Again the king's health gave way; again his accustomed cheerfulness forsook him; again he more than hinted his intentions, in the event of defeat, of abandoning England for his Hanoverian dominions. During the stay of the court at Windsor, it had become his custom — accompanied only by a single equerry, with whom he rarely exchanged a word, and followed by a single servant — to take long rides into the country, during which he appeared to be immersed in the most painful reflections. Generally speaking, before concluding his ride, he paid a visit either to his hounds, or to one of his farms, but evidently his former favourite pursuits had ceased to afford him gratification. When he returned to the queen's apartments, it was remarked by those who loved him that his countenance wore the same anxious melancholy which it had worn when he had taken leave of his family in the morning. According to General Budé: "The first five or six years he knew him [the king] he thought he never saw such a temper. He was always cheerful; never for a moment discomposed or out of humour. But the American war, in some degree,

altered his temper, from his extreme anxiety and disappointment on that head. The coalition, and having a ministry forced on him which he detested, hurt him also." According to the further authority of General Budé, the disposition of George the Third "was naturally of the most feeling and anxious kind," and consequently he was the more readily susceptible of great excitement.¹

In the meantime, notwithstanding Fox's powerful influence in the lower House of Parliament, and the formidable majorities which he was able to command, it had become more and more evident that the prevailing opinions and principles of the House of Commons were neither those of the king, of the House of Peers, nor of the public in general. At length, the difference of opinion between the Lords and Commons seemed likely to be brought to an issue by a motion, of which the Earl of Effingham had given notice in the upper House, to the effect that the House of Commons, in certain of their late resolutions, had infringed the spirit of the Constitution. By the king, the result of the

¹ General Budé was sub-governor to Prince William, afterward Duke of Clarence, and to Prince Edward, afterward Duke of Kent. "I do not quite know," writes Madame D'Arblay, "what to say of General Budé, except that his person is tall and showy, and his manner and appearance are fashionable; but he has a sneer in his smile that looks sarcastic, and a distance in his manner that seems haughty." The general died in the Upper Lodge, Windsor Castle, Oct. 30, 1818, at the age of eighty-two.

impending debate in the upper House was naturally looked forward to with the deepest interest.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

“February 4, 1784.

“I trust the House of Lords will this day feel that the hour has come for which the wisdom of our ancestors established that respectable corps in the state, to prevent either the Crown or the Commons from encroaching on the rights of the other. Indeed, should not the Lords stand boldly forth, this Constitution must soon be changed ; for if the only two remaining privileges of the Crown are infringed, — that of negating bills which have passed both Houses of Parliament, and that of naming the ministers to be employed, — I cannot but feel, as far as regards my person, that I can be no longer of any utility to this country, nor can with honour continue in this island.”

To the king's great satisfaction, Lord Effingham's motion was triumphantly carried by one hundred votes against fifty-three. “My present situation,” writes the king to Pitt, on the 15th, “is perhaps the most singular that ever occurred, either in the annals of this or any other country ; for the House of Lords, by not a less majority than two to one, have declared in my favour, and my subjects at large, in a much more considerable proportion, are not less decided.” And it was the

voice of his "subjects at large" which eventually pronounced judgment between the king and Charles Fox. The middle classes of society, weary of the selfish policy and insolent pretensions of the coalition, were fully prepared to resent the recent attacks upon the royal prerogative. They had taught themselves to regard Fox's India Bill as a shameful attempt to set up an arrogant oligarchy at the expense of the Crown, while, on the other hand, they saw in the virtues of Pitt, in his disinterestedness, in his unflinching fortitude and firmness, in his genius and eloquence, the germs of a pure, wise, and lasting administration. Fox, indeed, had no greater enemy, nor worse adviser, than himself. In the first place, by his unnatural coalition with the Tory party he had placed a ladder at the feet of Pitt, which enabled his younger rival to mount to a height of power more despotic, and more durable than any British minister had achieved since the fall of Sir Robert Walpole; and, in the next place, by his treatment of the king, he had invested George the Third with a popularity for which he had long sighed in vain, and which, at this particular period, he scarcely seems to have merited. Unquestionably, the share which the king had had in stifling Fox's India Bill had been, to say the least of it, an undignified, if not an unconstitutional proceeding; while still more reprehensible was the preference which he publicly showed for Pitt's administration over that

of Fox and the Duke of Portland, by allowing Pitt to confer no fewer than four baronies,¹ whereas he had refused to the Whigs the disposal of even a single coronet. The precedents which he thus created were not the less pregnant with future danger to the Constitution because he had the plea of having received great provocation, or because his conduct subsequently met with the approval of a majority of his subjects.

At all events, Fox had, for the present at least, entirely forfeited all his former boasted popularity ; so much so, that, at a public meeting at Westminster, the "friend of the people" was actually hissed and groaned at by his own constituents. If, said Governor Johnstone, in the House of Commons, there were to be an election for king, he would give his vote in favour of Mr. Fox, but, on the other hand, he wished to preserve the Constitution from the danger with which it was menaced by his India Bill. Still stronger was the language of Fox's colleague for the representation of Westminster, Sir Cecil Wray. "I cannot," he said, "consistently with my duty or my principles, contribute by my vote to replace in a Cabinet the

¹ On the 5th of January, 1784, Thomas Pitt was created Baron Camelford, of Boconnock in Cornwall ; on the 30th of the same month, Edward Eliot was created Baron Eliot of St. Germans ; while almost at the same time Henry, Lord Carteret, was preferred from an Irish, to an English barony, and the barony of Lovaine of Alnwick conferred on the Duke of Northumberland, to descend to his second son.

very individuals who, by their late daring invasion of the rights and properties of their fellow subjects, have been so justly dismissed by his Majesty, and some of whom ought to have been brought to the block." It was manifest to him, added Sir Cecil, that "the voice of the House of Commons was no longer the voice of the people of England." It had been Fox's boast, while still a minister of the Crown, that he owed his situation, not to the favour of his sovereign, but to the people, and, accordingly, now that it was the people who called upon him to resign his tribuneship, great indeed must have been his mortification. From all parts of the kingdom addresses reached the king, thanking him for having dismissed his late unprincipled advisers. "We, your faithful citizens," runs the address of the City of London, "lately beheld with infinite concern the progress of a measure which equally tended to encroach on the rights of your Majesty's Crown, to annihilate the chartered rights of the East India Company, and to raise a new power unknown to this free government, and highly inimical to its safety. As this dangerous measure was warmly supported by your Majesty's late ministers, we heartily rejoice in their dismission, and humbly thank your Majesty for exerting your prerogative in a manner so salutary and constitutional." Even the borough of Banbury, for which Lord North sat in the House of Commons, sent up an address to the

king, thanking him for the dismissal of their representative.

Neither was the new favour with which the king was regarded confined to the friends of prerogative and to the middle classes. Men whose opinions had long been diametrically opposed to those of the court were now to be found amongst its champions. Lord Mahon, an eccentric lord, who would apparently have been a leveller had he not been born a noble, arrayed himself on the side of his youthful brother-in-law. Lord Mountmorres, whose conduct during the riots of 1769 is said to have bordered on high treason, became an enthusiast in the cause of Pitt. Mason, the poet, lately one of the most zealous promoters of the formidable York Parliamentary Reform Association, "plunged," in the words of his friend Walpole, "into the most preposterous support of prerogative." It was the duty of every Englishman, he proclaimed, to fly to the aid of his sovereign.¹ The Duke of Richmond, the advocate of universal suffrage, the Earl of Effingham, who had been a most active opponent of the government, and Earl Harcourt, whose boast it used to be that he never appeared at court but he wore a ring bearing a

¹ The conduct of Mason, on this occasion, dissolved an intimacy between himself and Walpole which had lasted for twenty years, and which was destined not to be revived till twelve years afterward, when both of these gifted men were near the verge of the grave.

republican symbol,¹ were now among the loudest to declaim against Fox and his party, as the enemies of the Constitution. Even Wilkes turned courtier, and figured at the king's levees at St. James's.

In the meantime, notwithstanding the abuse and ridicule which, in and out of Parliament, were levelled at Pitt, his popularity more than kept pace with that of the king. In the same degree that his contest with the coalition grew more and more exciting, the public grew more and more enthusiastic in his cause. To Colonel Ross, for instance, Lord Cornwallis writes, February 17, 1784, "The mass of the people are certainly with the present ministry;" and again his lordship writes, on the 23d: "Pitt rises every day in character and estimation as to abilities, and he positively declared on Friday night, in one of the best speeches that ever was made, that he would not resign. I have not dined with, or seen in private, the great personage [the Prince of Wales] you inquire about; nor, I

¹ The seal-ring in question bore the cap of liberty between two daggers. Walpole tells us that, on Lord Harcourt turning courtier, he presented the ring to "Lady Jersey's little boy." "Lord Harcourt," writes Walpole, "had been so obnoxious to the court, that when his mother lately died, the queen did not send a message to the countess to say that she would call on her, though this be always done in etiquette to a countess, and as constantly refused; in consequence, Lord and Lady Harcourt never went near the court." Six months after Lord Harcourt's being reconciled to the court, August 7, 1784, his countess was appointed a lady of the bedchamber to Queen Charlotte, in the room of the Duchess of Argyle.

believe, does any one who votes as I do. In short, there is not a more violent Foxite than him in the kingdom." Among other evidences of the high estimation in which Pitt was held by his fellow countrymen, the Corporation of the city of London, under the most flattering circumstances, thanked him for his public services, and voted him its freedom in a gold box. On the 28th of February a deputation from the city waited upon him at the residence of his brother, the Earl of Chatham, in Berkeley Square, and, after having presented him with his new honours, attended him to the hall of the Grocers' Company, from whom he had accepted an invitation to a magnificent banquet. Since the days when Sir Philip Sydney had been made free of the company, no guest more illustrious had enjoyed its hospitality. In the present modern hall, full-length portraits of Pitt and George the Third continue to recall the days of their great popularity in 1784. The person selected by the company to welcome the youthful minister was the once redoubtable demagogue, Wilkes. Pitt's progress into the city resembled a triumph. On his return, also, at night, many of the tradesmen in Fleet Street and the Strand illuminated their houses, while a large multitude of people, filling the air with their cheers and huzzas, followed the coach in which he sat with his brother, Lord Chatham, and his brother-in-law, Lord Mahon. All went on quietly till they reached St. James's Street,

when suddenly it was communicated to the discomfited politicians at Brooks's Club, that the populace had removed the horses from the minister's coach and were about to drag him past their windows in triumph. A serious, and apparently premeditated, breach of the peace was the result. Just as the premier's equipage, still drawn by the multitude, was passing Brooks's, a sudden and furious onslaught was made upon it by a body of ruffians, armed with bludgeons and the broken poles of sedan-chairs. Rumour even whispered that among the assailants were more than one aristocratic member of the club, who quitted the faro-table for the purpose of taking a part in this dastardly attack. In the meantime, the doors of the carriage had been forced open by the hired bullies, and several blows aimed at Pitt, which were fortunately warded off by Lord Chatham. The life of the minister, indeed, seems to have been, for some seconds, in considerable danger, nor was it till after a severe contest that he and his two relatives were enabled to effect their escape into White's Club. Of the three, Lord Mahon seems to have found the greatest difficulty in extricating himself :

“ Ah ! why Mahon's disastrous fate record ?
Alas ! how fear can change the fiercest lord !
See the sad sequel of the Grocers' treat ;
Behold him dashing up St. James's Street !
Pelted and scared by Brooks's hellish sprites,
And vainly fluttering round the door of White's.”

— *Political Eclogues.*

Whether Fox, as was much suspected by his contemporaries, bore a part in the assault on his rival, is a question which we have not the means of deciding. When a friend, however, taxed him with it, he not only emphatically denied the truth of the charge, but pleaded, in proof of his entire innocence, that he was in bed at the time with his mistress, Mrs. Armstead, afterward Mrs. Fox, who was prepared to substantiate the fact upon oath. "Fox's vindication of himself," said Selwyn, "reminds me of the favourite defence of the rogues at the bar of the Old Bailey, who first of all plead an alibi, and then produce their concubines as their witnesses."¹

The King to Mr. Pitt.

"February 29, 1784.

"I was much hurt at hearing since the drawing-room of the outrage committed the last night under the auspices of Brooks's against Mr. Pitt on his return from the city, but am very happy to find he escaped without injury. I trust every means will be employed to find out the abettors of this [*sic orig.*], which I should hope may be got at. As I suppose to-morrow will be a late day at the

¹ Walpole, speaking of the famous election for Westminster which took place only a few weeks after the attack upon Pitt's person, incidentally mentions the "Irish chairmen being retained by Mr. Fox's party;" adding, in a note, that "almost all the hackney chairmen in London were Irish."

House of Commons, and consequently that I cannot be wanted on Tuesday, I mean to-morrow after court to go to Windsor for the sake of hunting that day.

“G. R.”

The great contest between Pitt and Fox was now drawing rapidly, and, as far as Pitt was concerned, triumphantly to an end. There existed, indeed, an apprehension on the part of the king and his minister, that Fox would cut off the supplies, but Lord Mahon judged otherwise, and judged rightly. “At Pitt’s,” writes Wilberforce, “we had a long discussion ; and I remember well the great penetration showed by Lord Mahon. ‘What am I to do,’ said Pitt, ‘if they stop the supplies?’ ‘They will not stop them,’ said Mahon ; ‘it is the very thing which they will not venture to do.’” Pitt’s path now lay clear before him. The wisdom and foresight which he had displayed in resisting the king’s earnest appeal to him to dissolve Parliament, had gradually produced the results which he had anticipated. By degrees, the “virtuous and respectable majority” of the coalition — as Fox thought proper to style it — grew smaller and smaller, till, on a grand debate on the 8th of March, the numbers were reduced to one. By this time the Mutiny Bill had been passed and the supplies voted. With the ready concurrence, therefore, of his ministers, the king re-

solved to take the sense of the nation, and accordingly, on the 25th, the Parliament was dissolved. No victory could be more complete than that which Pitt had achieved. In a Parliament of Lord North's own calling, and filled with his friends and followers, he had not only succeeded in defeating him, but he had also defeated Fox and his splendid phalanx of eloquence and talent. He had fought them with their own weapons, and vanquished them upon their own battle-field. "I shall ever," writes the king to his young minister, "with pleasure consider that by the prudence, as well as rectitude, of one person in the House of Commons, this great change has been effected; and that he will be ever able to reflect with satisfaction, that in having supported me he has saved the Constitution, — the most perfect of human formations."

The result of the general election answered the king's most sanguine expectations. The Dissenters voted against their old allies, the Whigs, and even the Yorkshire Association declared against the coalition. In quarters where the court had the least right to expect success — in counties where the estates of the Whigs were the most princely and where their influence had long been paramount — the opposition found themselves signally defeated. The great commoner, Mr. Coke, lost his election for Norfolk. Lord John Cavendish lost his election for the city of York. Sir Charles Bunbury was defeated in Suffolk.

George Byng was thrown out in Middlesex, and Sir George Savile was unable to bring in his nephew and heir for the county of York. That important county, notwithstanding the vast counter influence of the Cavendishes, the Fitzwilliams, and the Howards, returned as its representatives, Duncombe, the son of a banker, and Wilberforce, the son of a merchant of Hull. Fox's friend, Thomas Grenville, was defeated in Buckinghamshire. Both the late members for the University of Cambridge — Mansfield, who had been solicitor-general under the late administration, and the Hon. John Townshend, late a lord of the admiralty — failed to obtain their reelection. General Conway was defeated at Bury, and Erskine was unable to procure a seat in any quarter. "Plenty of bad news from all quarters," writes Fox; "but I think that I feel misfortunes, when they come thick, have the effect rather of rousing my spirits than sinking them." As late as the twenty-third day of the Westminster election, Fox not only stood far below Lord Hood on the poll, but having fewer votes even than his unpopular opponent, Sir Cecil Wray, would in all probability have lost his election but for the open partisanship of the Prince of Wales, and the active canvass and persuasive fascinations of the beautiful Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire.¹ "Westminster goes on well,"

¹ Daughter of John, first Earl Spencer. In 1774, at the age of seventeen, she became the wife of William, fifth Duke of

writes Pitt to Wilberforce, "in spite of the Duchess of Devonshire, and the other women of the people." Pitt himself was returned at the head of the poll for the University of Cambridge, with Lord Euston for his colleague. "I cannot refrain," writes the king to him, on the 5th of April, "from the pleasure of expressing to Mr. Pitt how much his success at Cambridge has made me rejoice, as he is the highest on the return, and that Lord Euston

Devonshire. The exertions which the duchess made to secure the return of Fox for Westminster are well known. "Mr. Fox," writes Walpole, on the 13th of April, "has all the popularity in Westminster; and, indeed, is so amiable and winning that, could he have stood in person all over England, I question whether he would not have carried the Parliament. The beldams hate him; but most of the pretty women in London are indefatigable in making interest for him; the Duchess of Devonshire in particular. I am ashamed to say how coarsely she has been received by some worse than tars. But me nothing has shocked so much as what I heard this morning. At Dover they roasted a poor fox alive by the most diabolical allegory, a savage meanness that an Iroquois could not have committed!" During her canvass the duchess made no scruple of visiting the abodes of the humblest of the electors, dazzling and enchanting them by the fascination of her manner, the power of her beauty, and the influence of her high rank, and sometimes carrying off to the hustings the meanest mechanic in her own carriage. "The Duchess of Devonshire," writes Lord Cornwallis, on the 19th of April, "is indefatigable in her canvass for Fox. She was in the most blackguard houses in Long Acre by eight o'clock this morning." The fact of the duchess having purchased the vote of an impracticable butcher by a kiss is said to be unquestionable. It was on one of these occasions that the well-known compliment is said to have been made her by an Irish mechanic, "I could light my pipe at your eyes." The duchess died in March, 1806, at the age of forty-nine.

is his colleague. This renders his election for the university a real honour, and reconciles me to his having declined Bath."

One of the most remarkable features of the great electioneering contest of 1784 was the fact of the ex-demagogue, Wilkes, being returned as the ministerial candidate for the county of Middlesex. Pitt, as we have seen, had been the constant and sincere advocate of parliamentary reform, and accordingly it was upon this score that Wilkes was enabled to press upon the freeholders of the county the expediency of extending all their support to the "virtuous young minister" whose liberal and enlightened principles promised to advance the best interests of the country. At the close of the different elections, it was computed that of Fox's former followers no fewer than one hundred and sixty had failed to obtain seats in the new Parliament. It was the fashion of the time to speak of them as "Fox's Martyrs."

The new Parliament met on the 18th of May, ten days before Pitt had completed his twenty-fifth year. Whatever political errors or shortcomings he may have been guilty of in the course of his later career, he had, at this period at least, achieved for himself a reputation perhaps the most brilliant in Europe. According to Walpole, his struggle with Fox excited no less interest at Amsterdam and Versailles than in the

precincts of St. James's. "He became," writes Lord Macaulay, "the greatest master of the whole art of parliamentary government that has ever existed; a greater than Montague or Walpole; a greater than his father, Chatham, or his rival, Fox; a greater than either of his illustrious successors, Canning and Peel." "You know," writes Lord Carteret to General Grant, "that I am not partial to Pitt; and yet I must own that he is infinitely superior to anything I ever saw in the House, and I declare that Fox and Sheridan, and all of them put together, are nothing to him. He, without support or assistance, answers them all with ease to himself, and they are just chaff before the wind to him."

Deep as was the interest which George the Third had taken in the late exciting condition of politics, it had occasioned no interruption, as will be seen by the following letters,¹ in the interest which he ever took in public business and the public welfare. Lord Howe, whose letter opens the correspondence, was at this time first lord of the admiralty.

¹ The letters from George the Third to Lord Howe, which will from time to time be introduced into these pages, are printed, except where otherwise indicated, from copies which were furnished to the Right Hon. J. W. Croker from the original letters in possession of his lordship by the late Marquis of Sligo.

Viscount Howe to the King.

“ADMIRALTY OFFICE, Feb. 4, 1783, $\frac{m}{45}$ p^t 3 P. M.

“Lord Howe has the honour to submit to his Majesty’s perusal the papers received this morning by express from Admiral Sir Thomas Pye, relative to a claim made in the name of the Irish Volunteers embarked in the ships-of-war under orders for the East Indies.

“This claim is consonant to the terms upon which the Irish Volunteers were entered to serve in the fleet; and though Lord Howe sees no cause for uneasiness on this subject, he humbly submits to his Majesty’s consideration the propriety of his [Lord Howe] going to Portsmouth to-morrow morning, in his character of commander-in-chief of the Channel fleet, and, by directions from the admiralty, to see, with the concurrence of Sir Thomas Pye,¹ that proper attention is had to the just representations of the claimants, and that due order is preserved in the division of the fleet at that port.

“If the weather is favourable for Lord Howe to go off to Spithead on the day after he arrives at Portsmouth, he trusts he shall be able to return to town on Friday. He understands that General Conway has taken all the necessary steps with relation to the circumstances stated in Sir Thomas

¹ Admiral Sir Thomas Pye, at this time commander-in-chief at Portsmouth. He died on the 23d of February, 1785.

Pye's letter concerning the conduct of the 83d Regiment.

"The limitation for the time of service referred to, in the claim before mentioned, is expressed in a proclamation and not in an act of Parliament."

The King to Earl Howe.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, Feb. 4, 1783, $\frac{m}{20}$ p^t 4 P. M.

"The idea of going to-morrow to Portsmouth, to see that proper attention is had to the just representations of the Irish Volunteers, is very becoming of Lord Howe's character, and cannot but be the most efficacious means of keeping the fleet at Spithead in good order; and I should imagine that he will be able by the end of the week to return; but the present is so much the more pressing business, that it certainly calls most essentially for his attention. G. R."

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, March 23, 1783, $\frac{m}{30}$ p^t 10 P. M.

"LORD HOWE:—I desire you will come here immediately. G. R."

The King to General Conway.¹

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, Feb. 28, 1783, $\frac{m}{42}$ p^t 5 P. M.

"After the discontents that have arisen among the soldiers on the subject of the East Indies, it is

¹ General Conway held the appointment of commander-in-chief of the forces from March, 1782, till the dismissal of the coalition ministry in December, 1783.

rather extraordinary that any neglect should not have been prevented by having sufficient money at Portsmouth for paying those who are going on that service.

"The Royal Lancashire Volunteers being on their march home, I suppose General Conway will as soon as possible let the North Yorkshire Volunteers also begin their march into the North, which will probably end any present mistake as to their situation.

"Sir George Yonge¹ came, I suppose, too late to St. James's this day, and has therefore sent me General Conway's letter, but neither the returns nor the list of recommendations.² I desire General Conway will send for them from the secretary at war, and enclose them to me. G. R."

¹ The Right Hon. Sir George Yonge, Bart., at this time secretary at war, and afterward successively master of the mint and Governor-General of the Cape of Good Hope.

² This passage affords further pleasing evidence of the interest which George the Third personally took in the claims of deserving military officers. "An instance happened this year [1781], which showed the attention the king always paid to the services and rewards of the army. Lord Amherst, then commander-in-chief, carried him a packet of military commissions to be signed, and the king, first looking over the list, observed one appointed captain over an old lieutenant. 'He cannot purchase,' said his lordship. But something in the name struck the king, and before he signed the commissions, he turned to one of many large folios, which are all in his own handwriting, and presently finding the name of the officer, with some memorandum of his private life very much to his credit, he immediately ordered him to be promoted to the vacant company."

The King to Viscount Howe.

“QUEEN’S HOUSE, 6th April, 1783.

“It seems rather difficult to understand Sir E. Hughes’s¹ accounts of his engagements, but it appears as if he is contented with the behaviour of the officers and men under his command, and that the French have on all these occasions retired; but I fear the honour that has been gained does not compensate for the defects occasioned to the general state of that fleet. Lord Howe’s knowledge must make him a much better judge than I can pretend to be, and therefore I will not say more.

G. R.”

The King to Viscount Howe.

“QUEEN’S HOUSE, March 31, 1784.

“On coming to town this day, I found the box containing the letter from Sir John Lindsay,² and the several despatches from Vice-Admiral Gambier.³

¹ Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Hughes was at this time commander-in-chief in the East Indies, where he fought five sanguinary engagements with the French. He died an Admiral of the Blue, on the 19th of February, 1794.

² Admiral Sir John Lindsay, K. B., at this time commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, died on the 4th of June, 1788. He was knighted for his gallant conduct at the siege of Havana.

³ Vice-Admiral Sir James Gambier, at this time commander-in-chief on the Jamaica station, died a Vice-Admiral of the Red, on the 8th of January, 1789.

"Lord Howe's idea of conveying in a frigate the crew and passengers that Captain Affleck¹ has luckily saved, is very proper, and the availing himself of the opportunity of getting certain intelligence of the present state of the port of Cherbourg.

G. R."

The King to Viscount Howe.

"WINDSOR, April 19, 1784, $\frac{m}{48}$ p^t 7 P. M.

"The loss of the *Superbe* is an unpleasant event, though I suppose she was so very much worn out, that if she had returned she must have been broken up. I am sorry to find the East India Company continue the war, which, if not put a stop to, must bring that whole part of the globe into a fresh combustion.

G. R."

The King to Viscount Howe.

"WINDSOR, Jan^y 9, 1785, $\frac{m}{20}$ past 10 A. M.

"The despatches from Sir John Lindsay shew that the Barbary States, as formerly, are inconvenient friends; and I fear, if some new mode of treating them cannot be devised, will hourly become worse.

¹ Capt. Philip Affleck, at this time captain of the *Triumph*, guard-ship at Portsmouth, and afterward a lord of the admiralty. He died an Admiral of the White, on the 19th of November, 1789. When in command of the *Triumph* he fought several severe and gallant actions.

“Sir Charles Douglas,¹ I am sorry to say, keeps his former vivacity of temper, which makes him, perhaps, deem what does not exactly suit his ideas as marks of neglect from his superiors, and impertinence from his inferiors. G. R.”

¹ Sir Charles Douglas, Bart., at this time commander-in-chief on the Nova Scotia station, died in February, 1789. He was captain of the fleet in Rodney's great action, having been previously created a baronet for his services in relieving the city of Quebec in 1776.

CHAPTER III.

Improvement in the King's Health and Spirits after the Defeat of the Coalition — His Domestic Life — Mrs. Delany's Sketches of the Habits and Amusements of the Royal Family — Juvenile Ball at Buckingham House — Mrs. Siddons's Dramatic Readings at Court — Estrangement between the King and the Prince of Wales — Dissolute Conduct and Extravagant Habits of the Prince — The Prince's Passion for Mrs. Fitzherbert — Mrs. Fitzherbert Withdraws to the Continent — She Returns to England, and Is Married to the Prince — The Marriage Kept Secret — Fox, in the House of Commons, Denies, on the Authority of the Prince, that Any Marriage Ceremony Had Taken Place — The Prince's Conduct on the Occasion — Considerate Conduct of the King and Queen toward Mrs. Fitzherbert.

By means of the strong and wise government which the king and his young Whig minister, Mr. Pitt, had conjointly succeeded in establishing, he was enabled, for some years to come, to enjoy an exemption from that party warfare, and those political distresses, which had so long chequered his existence, — distresses no doubt attributable in part to a defective education, and to the seclusion in which the earlier years of his life had been passed, but still more so to the ambition and inordinate demands of those who neither understood his true character, nor appreciated his many esti-

mable personal qualities. By his indomitable courage and perseverance — or, as his enemies would designate it, by his dogged obstinacy — he had effectually overcome that great Whig oligarchy which had domineered over his grandfather and great-grandfather, and was consequently permitted for a season to repose on his hard-earned laurels.

The king's victory over the coalition was no sooner completed than we find him resuming his former natural cheerfulness of manner, and again taking an interest in the innocent and dignified enjoyments of life. Again we find him amusing himself with superintending his improvements at Windsor and Kew; again mixing and familiarly conversing with the humblest of his subjects; delighting himself with relieving human distress or adding to human happiness, and, above all things, taking a father's pride in and enjoying the society of his young and beautiful family. Once more we find Mrs. Siddons enchanting the royal circle, either at Buckingham House or Windsor, with her readings from Shakespeare and other dramatic writers.¹ In the month of May, 1785, the famous musical festivals, in commemoration of Handel, afforded him opportunities alike of patronising and of enjoying, in all its grandeur, the art of which he was most passionately fond.

¹ George the Third was not only a great admirer of Mrs. Siddons's genius, but entertained for her personally great respect and esteem.

At one time we find him escorting the queen and her fair daughters from Windsor to Egham races, and, after having enjoyed a cold collation with them on the crowded course, riding familiarly among his subjects, gaily conversing, at one moment, with his cicerone, the Duke of Queensberry, or with the clerk of the course, and at another moment winning the heart of the lady mayoress by checking his horse as he passed her carriage, and addressing to her a few words of flattering courtesy. Not many weeks afterward we find him a guest with the queen at Lord Harcourt's seat at Nuneham, and, on the following day, visiting the colleges at Oxford, attending divine service in Christ Church cathedral, and quitting that ancient and classical city amidst the ringing of many bells, succeeded by a brilliant illumination.

From the pen of Mrs. Delany we continue to glean many interesting sketches of George the Third as he appeared in his social hours and domestic circle. We can see him riding over from Windsor to Bulstrode Park, attended only by a single equerry, and making amends for his invasion of the venerable Duchess of Portland's breakfast parlour by his unaffected affability and good nature. Sometimes he went attended by the queen and the princesses, with a gay company in their train. "Last Thursday, the 2d of October" [1783], writes Mrs. Delany, "a little before twelve o'clock, word was brought that the royal

family were coming up the park ; and, immediately after, two coaches and six, with the king on horseback and a great retinue, came up to the hall door. The company were the king and queen, princess royal, Princess Augusta, Princess Elizabeth, Princess Mary, and Princess Sophia, — a lovely group all dressed in white muslin polonaises, white chip hats with white feathers, except the queen, who had on a black hat and cloak ; the king dressed in his Windsor uniform of blue and gold ; the queen, attended by the Duchess of Ancaster, who is mistress of the robes, and Lady Elizabeth Waldegrave, who attends the two eldest princesses, and Mrs. Goldsworthy, who is sub-governess to the three younger princesses. The king had no attendants but the equerries, Major Digby and Major Price. They were in the drawing-room before I was sent for, where I found the king and queen and Duchess of Portland seated at a table in the middle of the room. The king, with his usual graciousness, came up to me, and brought me forward."

Nor was this the only courtesy shown on the occasion to the interesting old lady. The king and queen had each brought a gift for her ; the latter presenting her with a frame, on a new principle, for weaving fringe, and the former with "a gold knotting shuffle." A few days afterward, the duchess and Mrs. Delany returned the royal visit. "There were two chairs," writes the latter,

“brought in by order of their Majesties for the Duchess of Portland and myself to sit on, which were easier than those belonging to the room. We were seated near the door that opened into the concert-room. The king directed them to play Handel’s and Geminiani’s music, which he was graciously pleased to say was to gratify me. These are flattering honours. I should not indulge so much upon this subject, but that I depend upon your considering it proceeding more from gratitude than vanity. The three eldest princesses came into the room in about half an hour after we were seated. All the royal family were dressed in a uniform for the *demi-saison* of a violet-blue armozine, with gauze aprons. The queen had the addition of a great many fine pearls. When the concert of music was over, the young Princess Amelia, nine weeks old, was sent for, and brought in by her nurse and attendants. The king took her in his arms, and presented her to the Duchess of Portland and to me. Your affectionate heart would have been delighted with this royal domestic scene; an example worthy of imitation by all ranks, and, indeed, adding dignity to their high station.”

Two more court-pictures of the period — the one from the pen of the literary and fashionable Mrs. Boscawen, describing a “juvenile dance” given by the queen at Buckingham House, and the other by Mrs. Delany, containing a sketch

of Mrs. Siddons delivering her recitations in the royal circle — have each their individual interest. “Last night,” writes Mrs. Boscawen to Hannah More, “there was a *bal royal* at the Queen’s House ; in one room for children, which was begun by the Princess Mary and my Princess Elizabeth ; in the saloon, for grown gentlemen and ladies, viz., three princesses, four princes, and *l’élite de la noblesse* of both sexes. His Majesty minded only the little ones, whom he ranged and matched, and was quite delighted with their performance, requiring the queen to come and see how well they danced. Her Majesty sat on a sofa between the Duchesses of Beaufort and Marlborough. The king took a world of care of his little people ; charged them not to drink anything cold, and showed them where they might always find tea, etc. They supped very properly, and departed about one. The king, still guarding them, told the mothers to call for their cloaks, and to wrap them up well before they went down. The other ball and fine supper continued till the sun had been up some time. The Prince of Wales was there, *et en prince et en bon fils*.”

It was in one of the apartments which witnessed these gay festivities that Mrs. Delany listened to the charming powers of Mrs. Siddons. “Their Majesties,” she writes, “sat in the middle of the first row, with the princesses on each hand, which filled it. The rest of the ladies were seated in the

row behind them, and as there was a space between that and the wall, the lords and gentlemen that were admitted stood there. Mrs. Siddons read standing, and had a desk with candles before her. She behaved with great propriety, and read two acts of the 'Provoked Husband,'¹ which was abridged by leaving out Sir Francis and Lady Wronghead's parts, etc. But she introduced John Moody's account of the journey, and read it admirably. The part of Lord and Lady Townly's reconciliation she worked up finely, and made it very affecting. She also read Queen Katharine's last speech in 'King Henry the Eighth.' She was allowed three pauses to go into the next room and refresh herself, for half an hour each time. After she was dismissed, their Majesties detained the company some time, to talk over what had passed, which was not the least agreeable part of the entertainment. I was so flattered by their most kind reception of me, that I really did not feel the fatigue, notwithstanding I believe it was past twelve before we made our last courtesy."

Only one serious domestic distress, at this period, ruffled the otherwise even tenor of the king's existence. Unhappily no amendment had taken place in the conduct of his first-born, the Prince of Wales. Habitual dissipation, extravagance, and

¹ The comedy of the "Provoked Husband" was commenced by Sir John Vanbrugh, and completed at his death by Colley Cibber. It was first acted at Drury Lane in 1728.

disobedience, on the part of the son, had led to a confirmed coldness and contempt on the part of the father. It has been said that the king behaved with undue harshness toward the prince; that he was prone to exaggerate, rather than to extenuate, his faults, and that he made no allowances either for the thoughtlessness and susceptibilities of youth, or for the peculiar temptations by which the prince was unquestionably surrounded. That there may have been some truth in these allegations is not impossible; but, on the other hand, let it be remembered that, in addition to the distress which the prince's private immoralities had occasioned his father, he had also, by his political conduct, given him great and bitter provocation. A Prince of Wales, as Lord Malmesbury told his Royal Highness, ought to be of no party. "You are to be governed, sir," he said, "in your high station, by considerations very different from those which are to regulate the conduct of a simple individual." Yet, notwithstanding this excellent advice, we have seen the prince not only figuring as a political partisan before he was twenty-one, but, in the season of the king's great affliction and embarrassment, throwing all his weight into the scale in opposition to his father's government. We have seen him the intimate associate of men whose political principles and private vices were equally obnoxious to the king; the centre of a frivolous circle in which every kind of profligacy

was practised, and in which the sovereign was the favourite subject of ribald jocularities. Moreover, had the prince limited his profligacy to the pursuit of wild frolic and illicit love, the king, like other fathers, might have found excuses for his son, and have trusted to time to remedy the evil. But the prince's dissoluteness, as has been already intimated, was of no ordinary description. His libertinism at this time was scarcely the libertinism of a gentleman. At one and twenty, he had become the prey of money-lenders and sharpers, the associate of pugilists and jockeys. A regard for truth was certainly not among the better qualities for which his contemporaries may have given him credit.

Among the minor offences of the prince which were a source of distress to the king, was his reckless extravagance. It has been mentioned that, on his coming of age, the king had granted him an income of £50,000 a year, and that Parliament had voted him £60,000 to pay his debts and provide his outfit, yet, before he was three and twenty, we find him admitting that he owed £160,000. In the distress to which his folly had reduced him, he sought the advice of Lord Malmesbury, with whom he had two remarkable interviews at Carlton House, of both of which the accomplished diplomatist has bequeathed us an account. The first interview took place on the 27th of April. The prince on this occasion described himself as

on the verge of ruin. The king, he said, had desired him to send in an exact statement of his debts, and this he had done to the best of his ability. There was one large item, however, of £25,000, respecting which he said he felt himself bound in honour not to give any information, and consequently the negotiation had been broken off. If it were a debt, argued the king, which his son was ashamed to explain, it was one which he, as a father, ought not to defray. It was the prince's own wish, as he told Lord Malmesbury, to retrench by travelling on "a plan of economy," but the king had refused his consent to his going abroad. The king, he added, had plainly told him that, unless he married, he should oppose any appeal being made to Parliament to assist him; at the same time volunteering his parental advice to him to lay by £10,000 a year for the payment of his debts, by which means he would be enabled to remain in England. But how, inquired the prince, can I do this, "at a time when, with the strictest economy, my expenses are twice my income?" He saw no means of relief, he said, but by living abroad, whether with or without the king's consent. "What am I to do?" he exclaimed. "Am I to be refused the right of every individual? Cannot I travel legally, as a private man, without the king's consent?" In vain Lord Malmesbury endeavoured to dissuade him from taking so undutiful and so suicidal a step. "I am ruined," retorted

the prince, "if I stay in England ; I shall disgrace myself as a man." His father, he insisted, hated him. He had hated him, he said, since he had been seven years old. In vain Lord Malmesbury strove to dispel so cruel an impression from his mind. So far, he argued, from the king hating him, he was satisfied that no event could give greater happiness to his Majesty and to the queen, than to be able to restore him to their affections. It would prove alike the greatest blessing to the nation and the greatest comfort to the royal family. "It may be so," replied the prince, "but it cannot be. We are too wide asunder ever to meet. The king has deceived me. He has made me deceive others. I cannot trust him, and he will not believe me."

The second conference between the dissolute young prince and Lord Malmesbury took place at Carlton House on the 23d of May. By this time, the prince, for some reason or other, had abandoned his ill-advised intention of going abroad, while Lord Malmesbury, on his part, came armed, semi-officially, with a proposal on the part of Mr. Pitt, to the effect that provided the prince would relinquish that design, and, at the same time, consent to be reconciled to his father and to appropriate a portion of his means toward the liquidation of his debts, ministers would offer no opposition to an application being made to Parliament to increase his income. This liberal offer, however, instead of affording

gratification to the prince, as Lord Malmesbury had anticipated, was met, on his part, by an instant and scornful rejection. It was useless, he said. The king would never consent to an appeal being made to Parliament. He doubted whether Pitt could ever carry such a measure through the House of Lords. He dare not even mention the subject to the king. The king would turn him out of office at the bare allusion to such a proposition. Twice the prince repeated his former assertion that his father hated him, and would never be reconciled to him. "Besides," he added, "I cannot abandon Charles and my friends!" Fortunately Lord Malmesbury's visit and propositions were made with the full knowledge of Fox and the Duke of Portland, and consequently, on this point at least, the prince's arguments were easily refuted. On another point, however, the prince seems to have somewhat staggered Lord Malmesbury. "If you will not credit me," he said, "you will perhaps credit the king himself." He then opened an escritoire, and taking from it a correspondence which had recently passed between him and the king, handed the letters to Lord Malmesbury. "The prince's letters," writes the latter, "were full of respect and deference, written with great plainness of style and simplicity. Those of the king were also well written, but harsh and severe; constantly refusing every request the prince made, and reprobating, in each of them, his extravagance

and dissipated manner of living. They were void of every expression of parental kindness or affection, and, after both hearing them read, and perusing them myself, I was compelled to subscribe to the prince's opinion, and to confess there was little appearance of making any impression on his Majesty in favour of his Royal Highness." Whatever may have been the contents of those letters, the prince more than hinted a design of publishing them, in order that the public might judge between him and his father. This most improper intention, however, was at once, and very energetically, opposed by Lord Malmesbury. "It is not sufficient, sir," he said, "for the king to be wrong on one point, unless you are in the right in all." So long, he added, as any part of the prince's conduct remained open to censure, the public voice would assuredly decide with the king.

However harsh may have been the king's language in the course of his correspondence with his son, there is at least this to be said in his favour, that he and Lord Malmesbury put very different constructions upon the spirit of the prince's letters. Moreover, it would almost seem, by the following communication, that, instead of his having bigotedly turned a deaf ear to his son's solicitations, he was ready to place the settlement of the business in the hands of Pitt and the lord chancellor :

The King to Mr. Pitt.

“March 24, 1785.

“This morning I received the enclosed note from Lord Southampton,¹ on which I appointed him to be at St. James’s when I returned from the House of Peers. He there delivered to me the letter from the Prince of Wales. All I could collect further from him was, that the idea is that I call for explanations and retrenchments as a mode of declining engaging to pay the debts; that there are many sums that it cannot be honourable to explain; that Lord Southampton has reason to believe they have not been incurred for political purposes; that he thinks the going abroad is now finally resolved on; that perhaps the champion of the opposition [Fox] has been consulted on the letter now sent. I therefore once more send all that has passed to Mr. Pitt, and hope to have in the course of to-morrow from him what answer ought to be sent to this extraordinary epistle, which, though respectful in terms, is in direct defiance of my whole correspondence. I suppose Mr. Pitt will choose to consult the chancellor.

“G. R.”

¹ Charles Fitzroy, first Baron Southampton, and a general in the army. He had formerly been groom of the bedchamber to the king, and on the 27th of December, 1780, was appointed groom of the stole to the Prince of Wales. He died 21 March 1797.

There were easy means, as the prince was well aware, by which he might alike have reconciled himself to his father, and have honourably extricated himself from his difficulties. It was the earnest desire of his father, as well as of his father's subjects, that he should marry; and accordingly he had only to express a willingness to gratify that desire, and the king and the Legislature would no doubt have cheerfully consented to increase his income and liquidate his debts. As this was Lord Malmesbury's strongest argument, so was it the one which he reserved to the last, and that which proved to be the most unpalatable one to the prince :

"*Lord M.* May I suggest, sir, the idea of your marrying? It would, I should think, be most agreeable to the king and, I am certain, most grateful to the nation.

"*The Prince* (with vehemence). I never will marry! My resolution is taken on that subject. I have settled it with Frederick. No! I will never marry.

"*Lord M.* Give me leave, sir, to say, most respectfully, that you cannot have really come to such a resolution. You must marry, sir! You owe it to the country, to the king, to yourself.

"*The Prince.* I owe nothing to the king. Frederick will marry, and the crown will descend to his children; and, as for myself, I do not see how it affects me.

"*Lord M.* Till you are married, sir, and have children, you have no solid hold on the affections of the people, even while you are Prince of Wales. But if you come to the throne a bachelor, and his Royal Highness the Duke of York is married and has sons to succeed you, your situation, when king, will be more painful than it is at this moment. Our own history furnishes strong examples of the truth of what I say.

"The prince," continues Lord Malmesbury, "was greatly struck with this observation. He walked about the room, apparently angry. I moved toward the door, saying, 'I perceive, sir, I have said too much. You will allow me to withdraw. I am sure I shall be forgiven an hour hence.' The prince at once relented or affected to relent. 'You are forgiven now,' he said. 'I am angry with myself, not with you. Don't question me any more. I will think of what you have said. Adieu! God bless you!'"

When we remember how liberal had been the terms proposed to the prince, we may readily imagine how great was the surprise of Fox, and of the prince's other friends, when apprised of the ill success of Lord Malmesbury's mission. But not even Fox, intimate as he was with the heir to the throne, was aware of the true cause of that rejection, nor how little frank the prince had been in his conferences with Lord Malmesbury. The fact is, that the prince had fallen passionately in

love with a fascinating and accomplished woman, the late Mrs. Fitzherbert, who, to his great dissatisfaction, had made up her mind not to connect herself with him as his mistress, and who was prevented by the royal marriage act from becoming his lawful wife. To this attachment, we believe, is to be traced the strong desire which the prince had expressed to be permitted to retire to the Continent, as well as his mysterious design of allowing the crown to lapse by default to his brother's children. Apparently Mrs. Fitzherbert would have offered no very strong opposition to his solicitations had the prince consented to go through the marriage ceremony with her, even though, as she must have been well aware, the marriage would not have been a valid one, and their children, should she bear him any, would, to all worldly effects and purposes, have been illegitimate.¹ With this compromise also the prince himself would probably have been perfectly satisfied, but for the fact that Mrs. Fitzherbert was a Roman Catholic, and by the provisions of the act of settlement, passed at the accession of William and Mary, a prince of the house of Brunswick, by contracting marriage with a Roman Catholic, disqualified himself for succession to the throne. It may be argued that, the marriage being rendered null and void by the provisions of the royal mar-

¹ It was the opinion of one of the prince's own council, Sir Arthur Pigott, that the marriage was a valid one.

riage act, the prince was thereby relieved from the pains and penalties imposed by the act of settlement. The question, however, is one on which lawyers have disagreed, and consequently the prince shrank from incurring so costly a risk, till after the failure of every other expedient.

Mary Anne Smythe was the daughter of Walter Smythe, Esq., second son of Sir John Smythe, Baronet, of Eske, in the county of Durham, and of Acton Burnell, in Shropshire. She was born on the 26th July, 1756, and at the age of nineteen became the wife of Edward Weld, Esq., of Lulworth Castle, Dorsetshire, who survived their union only a few months. Her second husband was Thomas Fitzherbert, Esq., of Swinnerton, in Staffordshire, who left her for the second time a widow in 1781, before she had completed her twenty-fifth year.

Of all the attachments of George the Fourth, his passion for Mrs. Fitzherbert was alike the least disreputable and the most lasting. Neither her personal beauty nor her natural genius were of the most brilliant order; yet, according to the universal testimony of her contemporaries, her strong good sense, the sweetness of her disposition, the grace of her manners, the fascination of her address, her unaffected courtesy to all, and her active and unobtrusive benevolence, invested her with charms which it was almost impossible to resist. When the prince became enamoured of her, in

the summer of 1784, she was residing, in the enjoyment of a considerable jointure, on Richmond Hill, in Surrey ; her age being at that time twenty-eight, while the prince was only twenty-two. According to her kinsman, Lord Stourton, she was the original of the once celebrated ballad, "The Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill :"

"I would crowns resign to call her mine,
Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill."

The resistance which Mrs. Fitzherbert offered to the prince's suit had not only the usual effect of increasing his passion, but impelled him to resort to a very extraordinary expedient. One day, for instance, her drawing-room in Park Lane was unexpectedly invaded by Keate, the surgeon, accompanied by Lords Onslow and Southampton and another friend of the prince, who, with looks of consternation, implored her instantly to repair with them to Carlton House. The prince, they said, had stabbed himself. His life was in imminent danger. Nothing but her immediate presence in his sick-chamber could save his life. To visit her royal lover, unattended by one of her own sex, was of course out of the question, and accordingly she flew for aid and advice to her friend, the Duchess of Devonshire, in Piccadilly, who consented to be her companion to Carlton House. On the two ladies being introduced into the prince's apartment, they found him in bed with a glass of brandy and

water by his bedside; his countenance pale, and with blood upon his person. As soon as Mrs. Fitzherbert had recovered from the emotion with which the sight had overpowered her, the prince solemnly declared that nothing on earth should induce him to live without her; at the same time, with her reluctant permission, placing a ring upon her finger, apparently borrowed from the Duchess of Devonshire, and conjuring her to become his wife by the laws of God if not of man. Many years afterward Lord Stourton inquired of Mrs. Fitzherbert whether she believed the blood to be really that of the prince, or whether, in her opinion, the entire adventure was not a juggle. No, she said; the wound had left a scar which she had frequently seen. On the return of the party to Devonshire House, a deposition was drawn up of all that occurred, which was signed and sealed by every one present. The whole affair, however, was probably a mere trick. So little importance, indeed, does Mrs. Fitzherbert appear to have attached to the document, that she left it behind her at Devonshire House, where, as she told Lord Stourton many years afterward, she thought it probable it might still be preserved. At all events, whether doubting the sincerity of her royal lover, or else alarmed at the idea of plunging into engagements which were alike unsubstantial and fraught with personal peril, she resolved to escape from the prince's further importunities by an immediate

flight to the Continent. This resolution she lost not an hour in carrying into effect, nor was it till about eighteen months had elapsed that she returned to England.

The young prince was in despair at the flight of his idol. Among those to whom he poured forth his sorrows were Charles Fox and Mrs. Armstead, to whom he frequently flew for consolation at their beautiful villa, St. Ann's Hill, near Chertsey. On these occasions, as Mrs. Armstead told Lord Holland, he used to weep by the hour; "testifying the sincerity and violence of his passion and his despair by the most extravagant expressions and actions; rolling on the floor, striking his forehead, tearing his hair, falling into hysterics, and swearing that he would abandon the country, forego the crown, sell his jewels and plate, and scrape together a competence to fly with the object of his affections to America." In the meantime, the prince continued to assail his absent mistress with earnest and incessant written entreaties to return to England. She promised him, indeed, that she would never become the wife of another man, but it was not till the month of December, 1785, that she consented to return to England, and then on the prince's sacred assurance that the marriage ceremony should be solemnised between them.

The reappearance of Mrs. Fitzherbert in London naturally caused great alarm to such of the prince's friends as were aware of the violence of

his passion. Fox, more especially, at the risk of incurring the lasting displeasure of the heir to the throne, remonstrated with him, in the most earnest language, on the folly and madness of clinging to a passion pregnant alike with individual unhappiness, as well as with the most perilous political consequences. "The king," writes Fox to the prince, on the 10th of December, "not feeling for you as a father ought; the Duke of York professedly his favourite, and likely to be married to the king's wishes; the nation full of its old prejudices against Catholics, and justly dreading all disputes about succession; in all these circumstances your enemies might take such advantages as I shudder to think of." From the character of Mrs. Fitzherbert, Fox makes no attempt to detract. "With respect to Mrs. Fitzherbert," he writes, "she is a person with whom I have scarcely the honour to be acquainted; but I hear from everybody that her character is irreproachable, and her manners most amiable." Yet, notwithstanding this graceful tribute to Mrs. Fitzherbert's purity, we find Fox, in a passage in his letter to the prince, part of which Lord Russell — doubtless out of a pious deference to Fox's memory — has thought it proper to omit, writing as follows: "A mock marriage, for it can be no other, is neither honourable for any of the parties, nor, with respect to your Royal Highness, even safe. This appears so clear to me, that, if I were Mrs. Fitzherbert's father or brother, I would advise

her not by any means to agree to it, and to prefer any other species of connection with you, to one leading to so much misery and mischief." Apparently, nothing could be more satisfactory to Fox than the prince's reply. "My dear Charles," he wrote back, "your letter of last night afforded me more true satisfaction than I can find words to express, as it is an additional proof to me, which I assure you I did not want, of your having that true regard and affection for me which it is not only the wish but the ambition of my life to merit. Make yourself easy, my dear friend! Believe me, the world will now soon be convinced that there not only is [not], but never was, any ground for those reports which of late have been so malevolently circulated. I have not seen you since the apostasy of Eden." Yet, as we have just seen, Mrs. Fitzherbert had not only returned to England for the express purpose of being united to the prince, but, only ten days afterward, the marriage ceremony was actually performed between them.

Till within a very recent period, the marriage of George the Fourth with Mrs. Fitzherbert was disbelieved and denied in more than one high quarter. The prince himself, after he had become king, and while Mrs. Fitzherbert was living to contradict him, had the assurance to speak of "that absurd story, his supposed marriage." Yet the reality of their union is an indisputable one. After his death a perpetuation of the real facts of the case was, in

thought of me as being as good as dead, and to know
my dear mother as connected with you, or her
suffering when much misery and mischance." Appen-
ding nothing could be more satisfactory to her
than my father's reply. "My dear Charles," he
wrote back, "your letter of last night affords me
more true satisfaction than I can find words to ex-
press, as it is an additional proof to me, which I
assure you I did not want, of your having that true
regard, and affection for me which it is not only
the way, but the addition of my life to merit.
May you be ever my dear friend! Believe me,
the world will not want to know that there
was any one so good, and so true, and so grateful for
that name which of the most kind and most
kindly nature." I have not been yet able to
express to him.

Mrs. Fitzherbert.

Photo-etching after the engraving by Hopwood.

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globe, but only the day after the marriage
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the opinion of Mrs. Fitzherbert's friends, due to her reputation, and accordingly the king's executors, the late Duke of Wellington and Sir William Knighton, consented to place on record the proofs of a marriage which their royal master had so unscrupulously denied. The espousals, it appears, were solemnised in the drawing-room of Mrs. Fitzherbert's house in Park Lane, on the 21st of December, 1785. The ceremony was performed by a Protestant clergyman, though in part, apparently, according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church. The witnesses, besides the officiating minister, were Mrs. Fitzherbert's brother, John Smythe, and her uncle, Henry Errington. Some time afterward, in a season of threatened peril, Mrs. Fitzherbert, at the earnest request of the attesting witnesses, generously consented to cut off the signatures.¹ The certificate itself, however, bearing her own signature and that of the prince, — together with a letter from the latter, thanking Heaven that the witnesses were still alive to testify to the truth, — are still preserved in a place of security.²

¹ By the Royal Marriage Act (12 Geo. III., c. 11), all persons either "solemnising, assisting, or being present," at any unauthorised marriage with a descendant of George II., incurred the penalties of the statute of *præmunire*.

² By mutual agreement between Mrs. Fitzherbert and the executors of George IV., the following documents were lodged at Messrs. Coutts's, the bankers :

1. A mortgage on the pavilion at Brighton.

So profoundly, for a time, was the prince's marriage kept a secret, that, even in the pages of so well-informed a contemporary writer as Horace Walpole, we discover no allusions to it till two or three months after it had taken place, and then only in language of a doubtful and mysterious character. By degrees, however, the affair not only became a topic of discussion in fashionable society, but, in due time, was brought under the notice of Parliament. An appeal having been made to the House of Commons to increase the prince's income, Rolle, the influential member for Devonshire, intimated, in delicate, but sufficiently explicit language, that the question before the House involved

2. The certificate of the marriage, dated Dec. 21, 1785.
3. A letter signed by the prince, relating to the marriage.
4. A will written by him.
5. A memorandum written by Mrs. Fitzherbert, attached to a letter written by the clergyman who performed the marriage ceremony.

These documents were deposited in a box, which was sealed with the seals of the Duke of Wellington and Sir William Knighton, as executors of George the Fourth, and of the Earl of Albemarle and Lord Stourton as the nominees of Mrs. Fitzherbert. At the death of Mrs. Fitzherbert a strong desire was expressed by Lord Stourton, and afterward by his relative and representative, the Hon. Charles Langdale, to be allowed to make such use of the documents as they might think necessary for establishing, once for all, the fair fame of their kinswoman. Conscientious difficulties, however, were raised, — in the first place by the Duke of Wellington, and afterward by the Hon. and Rev. Edward Keppel, as executor of the Earl of Albemarle, and consequently the seals, it is presumed, still remain unbroken.

considerations far more serious than appeared on the surface ; considerations essentially affecting the interests both of Church and state. Fox was not in the House at the time, but as a future discussion was manifestly unavoidable, his absence was of no great importance. In the meantime, the self-willed prince found himself placed in a most unenviable position. The utter ruin of his pecuniary prospects, perhaps the loss of three kingdoms, might be the consequences of acknowledging his marriage with a Roman Catholic. On the other hand, a public denial of the truth would not only blast the reputation of the woman whom he had sworn to foster and love, but, in the event of its transpiring, he would stand convicted of being guilty of a pitiful falsehood. Three days, however, from the 27th to the 30th of April, were allowed him for deliberation, and in that interval he summoned Fox to Carlton House. Whatever may have been the particulars of their conversation, Fox, when he quitted the prince's presence, quitted it armed with the solemn word of his Royal Highness that the ceremony of marriage had never been solemnised between Mrs. Fitzherbert and himself, and accordingly he had the gratification of being able to assure a crowded and deeply interested House of Commons that not only was there no truth in the rumour of the Prince of Wales's marriage, but that it was, in fact, a "monstrous calumny." It was a "miserable calumny," he

repeated; a "low, malicious falsehood," calculated only to deceive and to afford food for scandal to the vulgar. Being asked by Rolle whether he had spoken from direct authority, "Yes," he said, he had spoken from "direct authority." Explicit, however, as was this declaration, Rolle pertinaciously refused to retract his words, and consequently there were many persons who either believed, or affected to believe, that Fox had deliberately sacrificed his respect for truth for the purpose of shielding the heir to the throne. Within twenty-four hours, Fox was made aware of the gross deception which had been practised upon him by the prince. On entering Brooks's he was accosted by one of the two relatives of Mrs. Fitzherbert who had signed her marriage certificate. "Mr. Fox," said this person, "I see by the papers that you have denied the fact of the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Mrs. Fitzherbert; you have been misinformed; I was present at that marriage." Fox, it is said, was so indignant at the treatment which he had received from the prince, that it was not till a twelvemonth had elapsed that he consented to see him again.¹ It was certainly to the credit of Fox that, when urged

¹ This statement no doubt is substantially correct, yet it seems scarcely reconcilable with a letter from the Prince of Wales to Fox dated the 10th of May, ten days after Mr. Fox's "denial" in the Commons, which the prince commences by addressing him as "My dear Charles," and concludes with the words, "Adieu, my dear friend; pray excuse haste; ever yours, G. P."

by his friends to undeceive Parliament, and thus vindicate himself in the opinion of the country, he refused to do so at the expense of ruining the reputation of the heir to the monarchy.

The prince's next step, after having succeeded in imposing upon his friend, was to endeavour to deceive his mistress. Accordingly, meeting her, on the day after the debate in Parliament, at the house of one of her female relatives, he advanced toward her with both hands extended, and having embraced her, exclaimed, "Only conceive, Maria! what Fox did yesterday: he went down to the House and denied that you and I were man and wife." Deeply offended and distressed, Mrs. Fitzherbert, it would seem, insisted so strenuously upon a public vindication of her character, that the prince was induced to send for Mr., afterward Earl Grey, then a young man of two and twenty, to whom he confided the secret of his marriage, and whom he endeavoured to enlist into his service. Lord Grey, to use his own words, found his Royal Highness "dreadfully agitated." "Charles," said the prince, "had certainly gone too far in the debate of the preceding night." Something must be said in Parliament for Mrs. Fitzherbert's satisfaction, which might take off the effect of Fox's unqualified declaration, and, he added, "You, my dear Grey, shall explain it." That high-minded nobleman, however, naturally shrank from entangling himself in so discredita-

ble an affair, and unhesitatingly refused to accept the commission. "Then," said the prince, as he excitedly paced the apartment, "if nobody else will, Sheridan must." Sheridan, accordingly, took an early opportunity of paying in the House of Commons a high-flown compliment to the private virtues of Mrs. Fitzherbert; a proceeding, however, which seems to have answered no good purpose, but merely to have left members to form their own conclusions as they had previously done.

To the last, the prince seems to have succeeded in persuading Mrs. Fitzherbert that Fox's denial of their marriage had been without his knowledge and consent, and accordingly her resentment toward Fox was rendered permanent. To the close of the prince's life, also, we find him vehemently insisting that there never had been any marriage at all between him and Mrs. Fitzherbert. Some forty years after their union, and three or four years after he ascended the throne, was published Moore's *Life of Sheridan*, a passage in which work, relating to this delicate business, and, at the same time, eulogistic of Lord Grey, appears to have given him great offence, and to have provoked from him renewed denials. Deliberately and distinctly, he told the late Mr. Croker that not only was there not a word of truth in the story of his interview with Lord Grey, but that "he had never had any communication with him on the

subject ;" and as for "that absurd story of his supposed marriage," he disavowed it altogether. Yet, in opposition to this startling declaration, there exists, in Lord Grey's own handwriting, not only an account of his interview with the prince, but also the unqualified assertion of that high-minded nobleman that the king actually confessed to him the fact of his secret marriage.

To those persons who have the well-being of monarchical institutions at heart, there can be but little satisfaction in dwelling on the moral delinquencies of George the Fourth. In order, however, to explain the conduct and clear the character of the father, it becomes at times incumbent on his biographer to point out the faults of the son. There were occasions, in fact, when, in the judgment of party zeal, George the Third could do nothing right and his heir little that was wrong. In and out of Parliament, at this period, it was insisted by the prince's political friends that he had been treated with almost systematic cruelty by his father. We have seen the prince himself asserting that his father hated him ; an assertion which has been seconded by the highest living Whig authority in our time. According to Lord Brougham, "he hated him with a hatred scarcely betokening a sound mind," for which he had no better reasons than the jealousy which princes often entertain of their successors, and his son's alliance with a political party which the king both

feared and detested. Yet Lord Brougham, in his "Sketch" of the character of the son, has drawn a picture of the prince such as would almost justify any feeling, short of positive hatred, on the part of a parent toward his offspring. Even the prince's political opposition to his father is assigned by Lord Brougham to no higher motive than a vulgar craving for excitement. No father and son, whose characters and conduct offered such strong contrasts to each other, could under any circumstances have associated on terms of affection and respect, nor possibly without entertaining feelings of mutual dislike. In the very case of Mrs. Fitzherbert, we discover how different were their natures, and how opposite was the view of honour which they severally took. The prince's treatment of that lady, after he had become sated with her charms, was no more, perhaps, than what was to be expected from what we know of his character. His intercourse with her was, in the first instance, broken off by a passion he conceived for Lady Jersey, the mother of five children, followed by his marriage with the Princess Caroline of Brunswick. Shortly after that event, he prevailed upon her to renew her connection with him, but again, in course of time, forsook her for the waning beauties of Lady Hertford. Moreover, on the occasion of their first separation he left her without uttering a word of explanation or regret, and, on the second occasion, offered her a

gratuitous insult.¹ Lastly, when he finally abandoned her, it was not only without having made any provision for her in the event of his death, but he was actually in debt to her for sums of money which she had borrowed for him on the security of the settlements made upon her at her former marriages. Widely different was the treatment which Mrs. Fitzherbert subsequently experienced from George the Third and from other members of the royal family. Through the interest of the queen and the Duke of York she obtained an annuity of £6,000 by mortgage on the pavilion at Brighton; but what she probably valued far more was the unceasing kindness with which the king and queen ever showed the wedded mistress of their son. The queen, she told Lord Stourton, had always been her friend, and as for the king, he could not have shown her greater affection, even had she been his own daughter.

Mrs. Fitzherbert survived her marriage with George the Fourth fifty-one years, and outlived

¹ Mrs. Fitzherbert, it seems, positively refused to renew her connection with the prince after his marriage with the Princess Caroline, unless with the sanction of the Church of Rome. "The Rev. Mr. Nassau, one of the chaplains of Warwick Street chapel," writes Lord Stourton, "was therefore selected to go to Rome and lay the case before that tribunal, upon the express understanding that, if the answer should be favourable, she would again join the prince; if otherwise, she was determined to abandon the country." The reply from Rome proved favourable.

him nearly seven years. At the time when he was near his end, in 1830, she addressed to him an affectionate letter which she found means of having conveyed to him by a friendly hand. The king, it is said, seized it with eagerness and placed it under his pillow, but, for some reason or other it received no reply. She had some grounds, however, for flattering herself that she was not forgotten at the last. By the king's dying wish, a miniature was suspended from his neck, and as one of three portraits of her, which he possessed, was found missing after his death, she encouraged the tender belief that, though forsaken, her memory had still been dear to him, and that her image lay with him in the tomb. Mrs. Fitzherbert expired at Brighton, on the 29th of March, 1837, in the eighty-first year of her age.

CHAPTER IV.

John Adams, the First Envoy from the United States of North America, Received at the Court of St. James's—His Interview with the King—Doctor Burney and the Handel Commemoration—George the Third as a Musical Critic—His Interest in Miss Burney and Her Novel of "Evelina"—Death of the Dowager Duchess of Portland—Kindness of the King and Queen to Mrs. Delany—Domestic Life in the Queen's Lodge at Windsor—Miss Burney's Introduction to the King and Queen—She Is Appointed to Office about the Queen—Prince William Henry, Afterward William the Fourth, as a Naval Lieutenant—Three of the Princes Entered as Students at Göttingen University—Attempt on the King's Life by Margaret Nicholson, Who Is Confined in Bedlam—Popular Feeling Evoked in Favour of the King.

ON the 1st of June, 1785, the reception-rooms at St. James's Palace witnessed the remarkable spectacle of the first presentation of an American envoy at the British court. The person who, on this memorable occasion, represented the infant republic, was one of its founders, John Adams, the "Colossus of Congress," as his friend Jefferson designated him, a man notable for his crusades against kings and priests, and famous as the successor of Washington in the presidency of the United States. To the king he is said to have been personally obnoxious; nor, when we consider

the prominent part which he had taken in effecting the dismemberment of the British Empire, and his ardent advocacy of antimonarchical principles, could his late sovereign be expected to regard him with favour. The king, as will be perceived by the following notes, had, nearly two years previously, been urged by the coalition ministry to receive an American envoy at his court, but at that time without avail.

The Right Hon. Charles J. Fox to the King.

(Extract.)

“6th August, 1783.

“Mr. Laurens was yesterday with Mr. Fox, to desire him to take your Majesty’s pleasure whether it would be agreeable to your Majesty to receive a minister from the United States. Mr. Fox, knowing your Majesty’s opinion upon this subject from what your Majesty did him the honour to say to him some time since, and feeling that it cannot be an agreeable subject to dwell upon, would have taken upon himself to have answered in the affirmative, if it had not been rather pointedly put to him to take your Majesty’s royal pleasure.”

The King to the Right Hon. Charles J. Fox.

“WINDSOR, August 7, 1783, 7 P. M.

“As to the question whether I wish to receive a minister from America, I certainly can never

express its being agreeable to me; and indeed I should think it wisest for both parties to have only agents who can settle any matters of commerce. But, so far I cannot help adding, that I shall ever have a bad opinion of any Englishman who would accept of being an accredited minister for that revolted state, and which certainly for years cannot establish a stable government."

Of the first, and celebrated interview between George the Third and Mr. Adams, the illustrious American has himself bequeathed us an account. On the day of presentation, he was bowed into the coach of one of the secretaries of state, the Marquis of Carmarthen, who conducted him to St. James's Palace, where he suddenly found himself ushered into the presence of a stately assemblage of peers, bishops, and ministers of state, the "focus," to use his own words, "of all eyes." His embarrassment, it seems, would have been great, but for the considerate attentions of the Swedish and Dutch ambassadors, who, on Lord Carmarthen quitting him for the purpose of proceeding to the royal closet and informing the king of the envoy's arrival, drew toward, and engaged, him in easy conversation. Presently the marquis returned and led him into the royal presence. "I went," writes Mr. Adams, "with his lordship through the levee-room into the king's closet. The door was shut, and I was left with his Majesty

and the secretary of state alone. I made the three reverences; one at the door, another about half-way, and the third before the presence, according to the usage established at this, and all the Northern courts of Europe."

The address, which the American delivered to his late sovereign was both judicious and graceful. It was his happy mission, he said, to convey to his Majesty the hearty and unanimous desire of the people of the United States of America, that in future there might exist the most friendly and liberal agreement between them and his Majesty's subjects; and further he was instructed by the American people to communicate to his Majesty their best wishes for his health and happiness, as well as for the health and happiness of the rest of the royal family. The appointment, he added, of an envoy from the United States to the court of Great Britain, would form an extraordinary and interesting epoch in the annals of both countries, and, accordingly, he regarded himself as peculiarly fortunate in having been preferred above his fellow citizens, thus to stand in his diplomatic capacity in his Majesty's presence. He should think himself the happiest of men if, by his good offices, he could recommend his country to the favour of his Majesty, and in any way conduce to restore that mutual esteem, good nature, confidence, and affection, which ought to unite people of the same language, religion, and blood.

The king, as Mr. Adams informs us, listened to him with a close and dignified attention, not unattended by emotion. "Visible," as the American admits his own agitation to have been, the king's voice, he says, was the more tremulous of the two. "Sir," said the king, "the circumstances of this audience are so extraordinary ; the language you have held is so extremely proper, and the feelings you have discovered so justly adapted to the occasion, that I must say, that I not only receive with pleasure the assurance of the friendly dispositions of the United States, but that I am very glad the choice has fallen upon you to be their minister." The king then added words which have become memorable : "I wish you, sir, to believe, and that it may be understood in America, that I have done nothing in the late contest but what I thought myself indispensably bound to do by the duty which I owed to my people. I will be very free with you. I was the last to consent to the separation ; but the separation having been made, and having become inevitable, I have always said, as I say now, that I would be the first to meet the friendship of the United States as an independent power."

The king then changed the conversation to lighter topics. "Smiling, or rather laughing," he good-humouredly rated the American plenipotentiary on his rumoured dislike to the French nation, which at this time was in high favour with Ameri-

can people. "There is an opinion among some people," said the king, "that you are not the most attached of all your countrymen to the manners of France." The remark somewhat embarrassed the American. "I must avow to your Majesty," he replied, "I have no attachment but to my own country." The king replied as quick as lightning, "An honest man will never have any other." The king then made a bow to Mr. Adams as a signal that the audience was at an end. "I retreated," he writes, "stepping backward, as is the etiquette; and, making my last reverence at the door of the chamber, I went my way. The master of the ceremonies joined me the moment of my coming out of the king's closet, and accompanied me through the apartments down to my carriage; several stages of servants, gentlemen porters, and under porters, roaring out like thunder as I went along, 'Mr. Adams's servants, Mr. Adams's carriage,' " etc. "The king," says Mr. Adams, "is, I really think, the most accomplished courtier in his dominions. With all the affability of Charles the Second, he has all the domestic virtues and regularity of Charles the First."¹ "Sir," it will be remembered, was Doctor Johnson's observation after his celebrated interview with the king — "his manners are those of as fine a gentleman as we

¹ When, in March, the following year, Jefferson was presented to the king and queen at St. James's, his reception, he informs us, was much less gracious.

may suppose Louis the Fourteenth or Charles the Second."

Another eminent person, who at this time was admitted to a private audience with the king, and who has left us an account of their interview, was Dr. Charles Burney, the author of the well-known "History of Music." During the progress through the press of a narrative, written by the doctor, of the great Handel Commemoration, the king had taken so much interest in the work as not only to send for the proof-sheets, but to add some MS. remarks of his own.¹ The work having been com-

¹ The king's MS. remarks were considered to be of so much consequence by Doctor Burney, that he cancelled the two sheets to which those remarks had reference, and embodied the king's criticisms in preference to his own. They are as follows: "It seems but just, as well as natural, in mentioning the 4th Haut-bois Concerto, on the fourth day's performance of Handel's Commemoration, to take notice of the exquisite taste and propriety Mr. Fischer exhibited in the solo parts; which must convince his hearers that his excellence does not consist alone in performing his own composition; and that his tone perfectly filled the stupendous building where this excellent concerto was performed." The second criticism has reference to the performance of the "Messiah." "Doctor Burney," wrote the king, "seems to forget the great merit of the choral fugue, 'He trusteth in God,' by asserting that the words would admit of no stroke of passion. Now, the real truth is, that the words contain a manifest presumption and impertinence, which Handel has, in the most masterly manner, taken advantage of. And he was so conscious of the moral merit of that movement, that, whenever he was desired to sit down to the harpsichord, if not instantly inclined to play, he used to take this subject; which ever set his imagination at work, and made him produce wonderful capriccios."

pleted, Doctor Burney, by his Majesty's own appointment, was permitted to present copies to the king and queen, in the library of Buckingham House, the same apartment in which Doctor Johnson had formerly had his celebrated interview. He found their Majesties seated together, without any attendants, and was received by them in the most frank and gracious manner. After the king had opened and examined his work, "You have made, Doctor Burney," he said, "a much more considerable book of this Commemoration than I had expected, or perhaps than you had expected yourself." The king then entered into a detailed criticism of the merits of the principal musical performers at the Commemoration; finding fault only with a single bass singer, whose notes, he said, were not only harsh, but sounded much more like the groans of a sick man suffering from a fit of the colic, than those of a person attempting harmony. "The king," writes Doctor Burney, "expressed much admiration that the full fortes of so vast a band, in accompanying the singers, had never been too loud, even for a single voice, when it might so naturally have been expected that the accompaniments, even of the softest pianos, in such plenitude would have been overpowering to all vocal solos. He had talked, he said, both with musical people and with philosophers, upon the subject, but none of them could assign a reason, or account for so astonishing a fact." The conversation happening

to turn upon Shakespeare, the doctor mentioned a German translation of his plays by Professor Eschenburg. "The Germans translate Shakespeare!" said the king, laughing; "why, we don't understand him ourselves; how should foreigners?" The queen remarking that she thought that the soliloquies were very well rendered by Eschenburg, "Ay," exclaimed the king, "that is because, in those serious speeches, there are none of those puns, quibbles, and peculiar idioms of Shakespeare and his times, for which there are no equivalents in other languages."¹ The last topic discussed was the remarkable story of the publication of the celebrated novel, "Evelina," written by the doctor's second daughter, Fanny Burney, afterward Madame D'Arblay, a story which, though five years had elapsed since the work had first appeared in print, was still a subject of interest in literary and fashionable circles. "And is it true," eagerly inquired the king, "that you never saw 'Evelina' before it was printed?" "Nor," replied the doctor, "even till long after it had been published." The king then drew from the gratified father a detailed account of "Evelina's" first introduction to the world, which, as the doctor informs us, afforded infinite amusement to the queen, as well as to his Majesty.

¹ "It is impossible," writes Mr. Hallam, "to deny, that innumerable lines in Shakespeare were not more intelligible in his time than they are at present."

In the month of July, 1785, the king's charming and venerable acquaintance, Mrs. Delany, had the misfortune, at the age of eighty-five, to be deprived by death of her beloved friend and daily companion, the Dowager Duchess of Portland. To Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, Hannah More writes on the occasion: "Indeed, my dear friend, I can judge by my own of the grief and surprise you must have felt at the death of the Duchess of Portland. She was of the noble and munificent style of the old nobility. She is deservedly regretted, from the palace to the cottage. The poor deeply lament her, and Majesty has shed tears for her. Dear Mrs. Delany, I hear, sustains this heavy blow with the resignation which might be expected from the piety of her character, but she also feels it with a sensibility which might be calculated from the tenderness of her heart." In the season of her bereavement, Mrs. Delany experienced, at the hands of the king, a mark of sympathy and kindness which touched her deeply, and which manifested in a very pleasing manner how great was the goodness of the king's heart. His Majesty, said the queen to Lady Weymouth, entertained the greatest respect and affection for Mrs. Delany, and could not therefore but be apprehensive lest, at her advanced time of life, and accustomed as she was to pass a great part of the year in the country, a constant residence in London might prove injurious to her health. He wished her, then, to take possession of a house

close to the castle at Windsor, which he proposed to place at her disposal for her lifetime; and as he was well aware of the additional expense which a second residence would entail upon her, he desired to take upon himself a part of the burden, by inducing her to accept an annuity of three hundred pounds.

The king's offer was no sooner accepted by the grateful old lady than he commenced, personally, superintending the repairs of her allotted residence, which were no sooner completed than the queen, in an autograph letter, dated the 3d of September, invited her to take up her abode there on the Tuesday following. It was the king's express injunction, wrote the queen, that Mrs. Delany should bring to Windsor "only herself, her niece, her clothes, and her attendants;" his Majesty and the queen having, in the meantime, taken upon themselves to provide every article necessary either for her use or comfort. Accordingly, on her arrival, she not only found the pleased and benevolent monarch on the spot eager to welcome her, but he had also caused the house to be stocked with plate, china, glass, and linen, the cellar with wine, and even the cupboards with sweetmeats and pickles. The garden, as Mrs. Delany herself informs us, was a "very pretty" one, and adjoined that of the queen. The king had even had the thoughtfulness to provide her with a handsome new sedan-chair, to enable her to attend divine service in his own

private chapel in the castle. Every want, indeed, had been thought of by the king and queen, and every wish anticipated.

On the morning after Mrs. Delany's arrival, the queen not only sent one of the ladies of the court to inquire after her health, but, at two o'clock, paid her a visit in person. Her Majesty was all affection and graciousness. "It is impossible for me," writes Mrs. Delany, "to do justice to her great condescension and tenderness, which were almost equal to what I had lost. She repeated, in the strongest terms, her wish, and the king's, that I should be as easy and happy as they could possibly make me; that they waived all ceremony, and desired to come to me like friends. The queen delivered me a paper from the king, which contained the first quarter of £300 per annum, which his Majesty allows me out of his privy purse. Their Majesties have drunk tea with me five times, and the princesses three. They generally stay two hours or longer." Mrs. Delany of course became a frequent guest at the Queen's Lodge, where she was more than ever charmed with the king, as she saw more and more of him in the centre of his domestic circle. "I have been several evenings," she writes, on the 9th of November, "at the Queen's Lodge, with no other company but their own most lovely family. They sit around a large table, on which are books, work, pencils, and paper. The queen has the goodness to make me sit down

next to her, and delights me with her conversation, which is informing, elegant, and pleasing, beyond description, whilst the younger part of the family are drawing and working, etc. ; the beautiful babe, Princess Amelia, bearing her part in the entertainment ; sometimes in one of her sisters' laps, sometimes playing with the king on the carpet ; which altogether exhibits such a delightful scene as would require an Addison's pen, or a Vandyke's pencil, to do justice to. In the next room is the band of music, which plays from eight o'clock till ten. The king generally directs them what pieces of music to play, chiefly Handel's." Such was George the Third as he constantly appeared in the society of those who loved him and whom he loved. "That the king," writes the venerable Earl of Guilford to Mrs. Delany, "has one of the best hearts in the world, I have known from his birth, and I have known the same to be in the queen ever since I had the honour of conversing with her out of a drawing-room. You, who know them so well, will believe that it is not as king and queen only that I love and respect them, but as two of the best persons I know in the world."

It was in the month of December following, on the occasion of one of Miss Burney's visits to Mrs. Delany at Windsor, that she was first introduced to the king and queen. Their Majesties, in common with the rest of the world, had been fascinated by her charming novels, "*Evelina*" and "*Cecilia*," and

had consequently conceived a desire to make the acquaintance of the authoress. Etiquette, it would seem, precluded her from being formally presented to them, except at a drawing-room, but as their Majesties were in the frequent habit of calling upon Mrs. Delany without previously giving her warning, it was presumed that, sooner or later, they would be fortunate enough to surprise Miss Burney in the parlour of her venerable friend. And so, shortly afterward, it happened. One afternoon, Mrs. Delany had retired from her drawing-room in hopes of refreshing herself by her usual evening nap, leaving there her nephew, Mr. Bernard Dewes,¹ Miss Burney, Miss Port² a very pretty niece of Mrs. Delany, and a little daughter of Mr. Dewes. The former three were in the middle of the apartment, amusing themselves with teaching the child some Christmas games, when the door opened and the king suddenly made his appearance. "I was disentangling myself from Miss Dewes," writes Miss Burney, "to be ready to fly off if any one knocked at the street door, when the door of the drawing-room was opened, and a large man, in deep mourning, appeared at it, entering and shutting it himself without speaking. A ghost could not more have scared me, when I discovered

¹ Second son of John Dewes, Esq., of Welsbourn, in Warwick shire.

² Georgina Mary Ann, daughter of John Port, Esq., of Ilam, and grandniece of Mrs. Delany.

by its glitter on the black, a star! The general disorder had prevented his being seen except by myself, who was always on the watch, till Miss Port, turning around, exclaimed, 'The king! aunt, the king!'" Mrs. Delany immediately made her appearance. "Every one," writes Miss Burney, "scampered out of the way; Miss Port to stand next the door; Mr. Bernard Dewes to a corner opposite to it. His little girl clung to me, and Mrs. Delany advanced to meet his Majesty, who, after quietly looking on till she saw him, approached and inquired how she did. He then spoke to Mr. Bernard, whom he had already met two or three times here."

While this scene was passing, Miss Burney graphically describes herself as having been in a most alarming state of trepidation. Hoping to escape unperceived, she was in the act of gliding toward the door of the apartment, when the king, in a whisper to Mrs. Delany loud enough to be overheard by all, inquired if the young lady were not Miss Burney. Mrs. Delany answering in the affirmative, the king bowed to the terrified authoress, and then, with great good humour in his countenance, approached and endeavoured to draw her into conversation. So overwhelming, however, was her nervousness, that to the simple questions which the king put to her he could elicit nothing but confused and incoherent answers, and consequently he returned in despair to his former place

by the side of Mrs. Delany. The conversation then turned upon the royal children ; the Princess Elizabeth being at the time seriously unwell, and the younger children indisposed with whooping-cough. To the best of his belief, said the king, neither he nor the queen had ever had that complaint. At first, he added, when only two of the children had sickened with the disorder, he had thought it right to send them away in order to prevent others being infected ; but now, he said, that so many had caught the complaint, there threatened to be no end of separations, and accordingly he was resolved to adopt no further similar precautions.

The king then made a second attempt to induce Miss Burney to talk. A volume of engravings, from the pictures of Claude Lorraine, happening to lie upon the table, it gave him an opportunity of asking her whether drawing was one of her accomplishments. He then turned the conversation to her novel, "Evelina," putting several questions to her, as he had formerly done to her father, relative to the remarkable circumstances connected with its publication. On this occasion Miss Burney would seem to have been somewhat more successful in entertaining the king ; at least if we may judge from the fact of his more than once laughing heartily at her replies.

While the party was thus engaged, a violent

knock was heard at the street door, which was speedily followed by the queen being ushered into the apartment. Again Miss Burney would willingly have effected her escape, but the king having once engaged her in conversation, it would have been contrary to all etiquette to have retreated. The queen, on perceiving the king, made him a low curtsey, at the same time expressing some surprise at finding him in Mrs. Delany's drawing-room. "Yes," he said, "I came here without speaking to anybody." A small table was then placed near the queen, on which she might rest, if she felt so disposed, either her needlework or teacup. A great deal of desultory talk now followed, the king and queen taking the principal part in it with perfect good humour, ease, and vivacity. Miss Burney was particularly charmed with their cordial and confiding behaviour toward each other; the king seeming to admire, no less than to enjoy, the conversation of his consort, while the queen's deferential manner to her husband was, as Miss Burney thought, intended to betoken that if she, the queen of a powerful nation, deemed it incumbent upon her to demean herself toward him as his dutiful and devoted subject, so much greater was the amount of respect and homage due to him from others.

The visit had now lasted for a considerable time, when the king, looking at his watch, remarked that it was eight o'clock, and that if he stayed any

longer he should miss saying "good night" to his children before they retired to rest. The queen instantly rose, and, having permitted Mrs. Delany to put on her cloak, affectionately wished her "good night." She then bowed separately to the rest of the company, whom etiquette had kept standing during the visit, and, having given her hand to the king, was conducted by him to her carriage. "It is the custom," writes Miss Burney, "for everybody they speak to, to attend them out, but they would not suffer Mrs. Delany to move. Miss Port, Mr. Dewes, his little daughter, and myself, all accompanied them and saw them in their coach, and received their last gracious nods."

Miss Burney seems to have been no less fascinated by her royal mistress than by the king. "The queen," she writes, "is indeed a most charming woman. She appears to me full of sense and graciousness, mingled with delicacy of mind and liveliness of temper. She speaks English almost perfectly well, with great choice and copiousness of language, though now and then with foreign idiom, and frequently with a foreign accent. Her manners have an easy dignity, with a most engaging simplicity, and she has all that fine high breeding which the mind, not the station, gives, of carefully avoiding to distress those who converse with her, and studiously removing the embarrassment she cannot prevent."

When, a few months afterward, Miss Burney was appointed to a confidential office about the queen's person,¹ and was thus afforded constant opportunities of studying her Majesty's character, she found no reason for altering her good opinion. During her daily and nightly service at the queen's toilet, as well as on other occasions, she found her invariably "sweet and gracious." In common with the world in general, Miss Burney had given her Majesty credit for good sense, an amiable disposition, and the most exemplary conduct in the relations of private life; but for the depth of reading and soundness of understanding, which she discovered in her royal mistress, the authoress of "Evelina" tells us that she was quite unprepared. "I had not imagined," she writes, "that, shut up in the confined limits of a court, she could have acquired any but the most superficial knowledge of the world, and the most partial insight into character. But I find now I have only done justice to her disposition, not to her parts, which are truly of that superior order that makes sagacity intuitively supply the place of experience. In the course of this month, I spent much time quite alone with her, and never once quitted her presence without fresh admiration of her talents."

¹ The situation held by Miss Burney was that of second keeper of the robes to the queen, to which she was appointed in July, 1786. She was indebted for it, it is said, partly to her literary reputation, and partly to the friendship of Mrs. Delany.

The following letters, written by George the Third about this period to Lord Howe, are acceptable as well from their bearing on the early history of the king's third son, afterward King William the Fourth, as from their evincing the interest which his Majesty continued to take in the naval service.

The King to Viscount Howe.

“WINDSOR, June 27, 1785, ^m₆₂ p^t 9 P. M.

“The report made by Commodore Gower, of the ships he has already mustered, shews the utility of his appointment, and will probably occasion a similar inspection in time of peace, every two or three years, by some alert officer. I am glad to find he is contented with the conduct of all his officers. I have heard from one of his lieutenants,¹ who acknowledges that the duty of his new commission sits more awkwardly on him than he should have expected, but trusts with assiduity soon to overcome it.

G. R.”

The Same to the Same.

“WINDSOR, 3 September, 1785.

“Lord Howe is desired to send the enclosed by the post to Portsmouth. I trust he will accom-

¹ Prince William Henry, afterward Duke of Clarence, had been promoted to the rank of lieutenant on the 17th of June, 1785, and on the same day was appointed to the *Hebe*, in which ship he was at this period serving.

pany it with an ostensible answer to Commodore Levison, and also a private one, directing him to give full directions to Captain Thornborough how he is to conduct himself toward his youngest lieutenant, and that he is to expect a very constant attendance from him on board his ship, while in any port."

The Same to the Same.

"ST. JAMES'S, Oct. 20, 1785.

"It cannot give Lord Howe more pleasure, in having found the guard-ships and marines at Plymouth in perfect order, than it does me in being able to authorise him to express to the vice-admiral, and to the commanding officer of the marines, my satisfaction at so favourable a report.

"G. R."

The Same to the Same.

"WINDSOR, 28 January, 1786.

"On returning from hunting, at six this evening, the queen desired to speak to me before I went to dinner. It was to communicate to me the arrival of William. I find it indispensably necessary to remove him from intercourse with the commissioner's house at Portsmouth, and therefore desire either the *Hebe* may be removed to the Plymouth station, or William placed on board the 32-gun frigate that is there. I merely throw out what occurs on a very unpleasant and unexpected

event. The only thing I am resolved on is that he must return on Monday to his ship. I desire Lord Howe will be here between nine and ten tomorrow morning. If he cannot conveniently be here so soon, I desire he will then come by half [an] hour past twelve, when I shall be returned from church. This will be delivered to you by Captain Elphinstone, who says he had the approbation of Captain Thornborough and Commissioner Martin for coming with William. G. R."

The foregoing letter seems to require some explanation. The "commissioner" at Portsmouth, whose residence appears to have been regarded by the king as so dangerous to his son's well-being, was Sir Henry Martin, Bart., who held that appointment from 1780 to 1789. The baronetage shows him to have been the father of four young daughters, the charms of one of whom in all probability constituted the temptation from which the king was anxious to withdraw his susceptible son.

The Same to the Same.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, March 6, 1786, $\frac{m}{35}$ p^t 5 P. M.

"I am sorry to see by the papers received at the Admiralty from Commodore Sawyer, that Captain Bentinck seems not so conversant in the necessity of obeying the orders of the superior officer as I should have hoped every one bred in the navy must have been convinced of. I do not see how the

commodore could avoid suspending him, or writing to the admiralty, when the captain even doubts the competency of that board's judging of the propriety of the suspension, and of the line of conduct to be held when there are not in port a sufficient number of captains to form a court martial.

“G. R.”

The following passage is interesting as throwing a light on the king's views in respect to the great question of parliamentary reform.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

(Extract.)

“March 20, 1785.

“Mr. Pitt must recollect that though I have ever thought it unfortunate that he had early engaged himself in this measure, yet that I have ever said that as he was clear of the propriety of the measure, he ought to lay his thoughts before the House. That, out of personal regard to him, I would avoid giving any opinion to any one on the opening of the door to parliamentary reform, except to him, therefore I am certain Mr. Pitt cannot suspect my having influenced any one on the occasion. If others choose, for base ends, to impute such a conduct to me, I must bear it as former false suggestions. Indeed, on a question of such magnitude, I should think very ill of any man who took a part on either side without the

maturest consideration, and who would suffer his civility to any one to make him vote contrary to his own opinion."

The king, as Lord Macaulay has pointed out, not only refrained from prejudicing others against his minister's projected plan of representative reform, but, by the tenor of his speech from the throne, at the opening of the session, he was understood expressly to recommend the measure to the consideration of Parliament.

On the 6th of July, the king entered his three younger sons, the Princes Ernest, Augustus, and Adolphus, — afterward successively Dukes of Cumberland, Sussex, and Cambridge, — as students of the University of Göttingen. To the Bishop of Worcester the king writes, on the 30th of July, 1786: "My account from Göttingen, of the little colony I have sent there, is very favourable. All three seem highly delighted and pleased with those that have the inspection of them. But what pleases me most is the satisfaction they express at the course of theology they have begun with Professor Less. Professor Heyne gives them lessons in the classics,¹ and has an assistant for the rougher work. They learn

¹ Professor Mayer was their instructor in the German language; Professor Heyne in Latin; Counsellor Less in religion, and Counsellor Feder in morality. The three princes lodged together in the same house.

history, geography, moral philosophy, mathematics, and experimental philosophy; so that their time is fully employed. I think Adolphus¹ at present seems the favourite of all, which from his lively manners is natural; but the good sense of Augustus² will in the end prove conspicuous."

In the summer of this year, we find the health of the Princess Elizabeth occasioning considerable uneasiness to the king and the royal family. To the Bishop of Worcester the king writes, on the 2d of September: "We have had some alarm, in consequence of a spasmodic attack on the breast of Elizabeth, which occasioned some inflammation; but, by the skill of Sir George Baker, she is now perfectly recovered, and in a few days will resume riding on horseback, which has certainly this summer agreed well with her." On the 28th of the month, also, Mrs. Delany writes to Mrs. Frances Hamilton: "I thank God Princess Elizabeth seems now restored to that health which every one who knows her must wish her on her own account, as well as many others, to possess. She is still delicate, and does not attend them [the king and queen] at the drawing-room when they go to town. Last Friday evening, she had the goodness to permit me and Miss Port to spend the evening with her. Nothing can be more amiable or more engaging than she is."

¹ H. R. H. the late Duke of Cambridge.

² H. R. H. the late Duke of Sussex.

It was a short time previously to the date of this letter, that an event occurred which nearly proved fatal to the king's life, and which, beloved as he was at this period by his subjects, excited an extraordinary sensation. On the 2d of August, the king was alighting from his carriage at the garden entrance to St. James's Palace, when a woman of respectable appearance, apparently about thirty-six years of age, extricated herself from the crowd, and presented to the king a paper having the appearance of a petition, which he good-naturedly extended his hand to receive. At this moment the woman, with her left hand, made a direct thrust at the king's heart with a knife, which he fortunately avoided by making a backward movement. The blow was immediately followed up by another, on which latter occasion the point of the knife struck the king's waistcoat, but fortunately the weapon was worn so thin that it bent against his person. At this instant one of the royal attendants seized the woman's arm, and wrenched the knife from her, which fell to the ground. The bystanders, it would seem, were proceeding to wreak summary vengeance on the assassin, when the king generously interfered in her behalf. "The poor creature," he exclaimed, "is mad: do not hurt her; she has not hurt me." He then stepped forward and showed himself to the populace, assuring them that he was perfectly safe and uninjured.

One of the first sentiments expressed by the king, on entering the palace, was a touching apprehension that he had ceased to be loved by his subjects. What had he done to them, he said, that he should merit such treatment? As for personal fear, as he had never betrayed any on former occasions when his life had been in imminent peril, it was not to be expected that he should manifest any in the present instance. When he entered the levee-room, where his presence was anxiously awaited, even those who were best acquainted with his constitutional fearlessness were astonished at his admirable imperturbability. All his thoughts seemed to be with the queen and his daughters, whose feelings he feared might be suddenly shocked by some abrupt or exaggerated account of the danger he had escaped. He was therefore anxious to hurry back to them, not being yet aware that his wishes had, in the meantime, been anticipated by a kind and judicious friend. The Spanish minister, M. del Campo, knowing that, after the levee, the king would be further delayed in London by having to preside at a Privy Council, had posted from the levee-chamber to Windsor, — not, as might be conjectured, with the officious object of being the first to announce the king's safety to the queen, but to take advantage of his high position by demanding an audience with her, and keeping her engaged in conversation till the king should arrive to give his own account of the adventure.

When the king returned to Windsor Castle there were present in the queen's apartment, besides her Majesty, the Princess Royal, the Princess Augusta, the Duchess of Ancaster, and Lady Charlotte Bertie. The king, on perceiving the Spanish minister, rightly conjectured his amiable motive for being there, and warmly pressed his hand. Advancing, in an animated manner, to the queen, "Here I am," he said, gaily, "safe and well, as you see, — but I have very narrowly escaped being stabbed." So abrupt an announcement produced a very different effect upon the queen and the ladies of the court than that which the king had anticipated. "The queen," writes Miss Burney, "was seized with a consternation that almost stupefied her." A most painful silence followed, interrupted only by the sobs of the two princesses. At length the queen glanced around upon the Duchess of Ancaster and Lady Charlotte Bertie, both of whom had burst into tears. "How I envy you!" she exclaimed; "I cannot cry." The king, however, full of gratitude for his escape, persevered in maintaining his natural vivacity of manner. "With the gayest good humour," writes Miss Burney, "he did his utmost to comfort them; and then gave a relation of the affair with a calmness and unconcern that, had any one but himself been his hero, would have been regarded as totally unfeeling." One of the most pleasing traits in the king's conduct on this occasion, was the considerate thoughtfulness with which

he hastened to spare the feelings of his venerable friend, Mrs. Delany. "Their Majesties," she writes, "sent immediately to my house, to give orders I should not be told of it till the next morning, for fear the agitation should give me a bad night." It was accordingly not till the following morning, that the Dowager Lady Spencer, by their Majesties' desire, broke to her the particulars of the king's escape.

In a society in which the king was so tenderly loved, it was only to be expected that so painful and unlooked-for a catastrophe should create an extraordinary sensation. "The affection for the king," writes Miss Burney, — who was by this time domesticated with the royal family, — "has been felt by all his household, and has been at once pleasant and affecting to me to observe. There has not been a dry eye in either of the lodges, on the recital of his danger; and not a face, but his own, that has not worn marks of care ever since." On the very evening of the day on which his life was attempted, the king, much to the apprehension of the queen, insisted on making his appearance among his subjects on the crowded terrace at Windsor, attended only by a single equerry. "The poor queen," writes Miss Burney, "went with him, pale and silent. The princesses followed, scarce yet commanding their tears. In the evening, just as usual, the king had his concert, but it was an evening of grief and horror to his

family. Nothing was listened to. Scarce a word was spoken. The princesses wept continually. The queen, still more deeply struck, could only from time to time hold out her hand to the king, and say, 'I have you yet!' When I went to the queen, at night," adds Miss Burney, "she scarce once opened her lips. Indeed, I could not look at her without feeling the tears ready to start into my eyes. But I was very glad to hear again the voice of the king, though only from the next apartment, and calling to one of his dogs." When Miss Burney, on the following morning, attended at the queen's toilet, her Majesty looked so ill, that it "was easy to see how miserable had been her night."

It may be mentioned, as creditable to the sensibility both of Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette, that they severally deeply sympathised with the distress which the attempt on George the Third's life entailed upon the royal family in England. In an undated letter, Mr. Eden, afterward Lord Auckland, writes to Lord Carmarthen from Paris: "Her Most Christian Majesty, at Madame de Polignac's, on Tuesday, in a conversation respecting the circumstance of the late attempt at St. James's on his Majesty's person, was led to mention the peculiar and affectionate manner in which his Most Christian Majesty was shocked by the news when it was first mentioned to him. And she added, in very becoming terms, that, on such an occasion, she felt most for the queen."

Of the unhappy woman who had been the occasion of so much excitement and of so many tears, a few words require to be said. She was twice examined before the Privy Council, where it was elicited that her name was Margaret Nicholson; that she was the daughter of George Nicholson, a barber at Stockton-upon-Tees; that the paper which she delivered to the king contained no other words than, "May it please your Majesty;" and lastly, that she was wedded to the notion that the crown of England was hers by right, and that, if withheld from her, England would be deluged in blood for a thousand years. Being asked upon what ground she founded her claim, she replied that it was a mystery. Apparently she was, by nature, a woman of some shrewdness. One of the lords of the Council having inquired of her why her memorial had contained no specific request, her answer was more rational than the question. So long, she replied, as she was able to effect her object, what could it matter whether the document was a written or a blank one? Of her insanity, however, not a doubt could exist, and accordingly, instead of dignifying her with a trial for high treason, she was committed to Bedlam. "Mrs. Nicholson," writes the Duke of Dorset, a few days afterward, "is very quiet in Bedlam; she has desired to have the use of pen, ink, and paper, which they have given her." Margaret Nicholson, it would seem, had formerly been a domestic ser-

vant in more than one private family. "My hand shakes, for I am old," writes Sir John Sebright to Sir Robert Keith, on the 10th of August ; "and I am going to the drawing-room with Lady Sebright, to assure their Majesties that we did not instigate our quondam housemaid, Margaret Nicholson, to attempt his sacred life — which may God preserve!"

The attempt on the king's life fanned into enthusiasm the popular feeling which already ran high in his favour. Addresses of congratulation on his escape poured in to the foot of the throne from all parts of the kingdom. Windsor, for a day or two, was filled with company, who came to pay their respects to their sovereign. The lord mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs of London went in procession to St. James's to offer him their felicitations. The levee which, two days after the attack upon him, he held at St. James's Palace, was thronged, not only by foreign ambassadors, by bishops, and judges, but by venerable peers, whom age for some time past had excused from waiting upon their sovereign, and by others whom inclination seldom induced to enter the palace. The king himself is said to have more than once made the remark, that the hearty proofs which he received of his people's love, on this occasion, more than made amends for the danger and annoyance to which he had been subjected.

CHAPTER V.

The Happiest Period of the King's Life — Their Majesties Entertained by Lord and Lady Salisbury — Court Picture from the Pen of Miss Burney — The King and the Sentinel — Parallel Anecdote Related of Oliver Cromwell — Royal Visits to Nuneham, Oxford, and Blenheim — Death of the Princess Amelia, the King's Aunt; Her Eccentric Character — Institution of Sunday-schools: Richard Raikes; Sarah Trimmer; Joshua Kirby — Interest Taken by Their Majesties in Pious Work — The King's Letters to Arthur Young, and Agricultural Improvements — John Howard — Pleasure Taken by the King in the Society of Eminent Men — His Acquaintance with Doctor Beattie — His Visit to Eton on "Election Monday" — Conduct of the Prince of Wales — Return of the Duke of York — Mrs. Delany — Anecdotes of the King — Death of Mrs. Delany — Extracts from the King's Letters — Mr. Pitt.

THE interval of time between Mr. Pitt's elevation to the premiership in December, 1783, and the dreadful mental malady which seized the king in October, 1788, was the most tranquil, and perhaps the happiest, period of his Majesty's life. He had succeeded in emancipating himself from the haughty domination of the great Whig houses. The affection with which he was regarded by his subjects was the source of constant gratification to him. The strong and wise administration of

Mr. Pitt was a government after his own heart. Under these circumstances, though still thoroughly enjoying the pleasures of domestic privacy, we find him gratifying his subjects by constantly appearing amongst them ; conversing familiarly with the poor and the humble, and enjoying the hospitality of the rich. "I never," writes the Duke of Dorset to Mr Eden, "saw the king in such spirits. They rise in proportion to the stocks, which are beyond the sanguine expectations of everybody."¹

In February, 1786, so soon as Mrs. Siddons had recovered from her lying-in, we find the king ordering Murphy's comedy, "The Way to Keep Him," in which the great actress performed the part of Mrs. Lovemore. A few days afterward, Mrs. Billington, under the patronage of the king, sang for the first time in London, in the character of Rosetta, in Bickerstaffe's comic opera of "Love in a Village." In the month of April following, we find the king and queen magnificently entertained by Lord and Lady Salisbury, at their mansion in

¹ "The general voice of an opposition, distinguished for talents and for wit, had accused the king of affecting the retired state of an Eastern sultan, rather than the social dignity of a British monarch. The qualities which ought to have counterbalanced those impressions, the firmness and soundness of his judgment, the steadiness of his courage, the high principle upon which he regulated his conduct, the sacrifices of ease, of amusement, of indulgence, even of health, which, with unostentatious perseverance, George the Third offered up year after year to the regular discharge of his regal duties, were long in forcing their way to the public."

Arlington Street, on the occasion of the christening of an infant daughter, whom the marchioness, after nearly thirteen years of barrenness, had presented to her lord. The Archbishop of Canterbury performed the ceremony. The king, the queen, and the Princess Royal stood as sponsors for the child. There may be persons to whom it may be not uninteresting to be informed that the queen was habited in green, covered with silver gauze; that her head-dress was a tiara of diamonds; that the royal gift was a magnificent silver salver; that the marchioness received their Majesties sitting up in her bed; that the bed was covered with a counterpane of white satin; and that the curtains were of green damask, festooned with flowers, and lined* with orange-coloured silk. At the proper moment, Harriet, Countess of Essex, delivered the child to the queen, who placed it in the arms of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The names given to the infant were Georgiana Charlotte Augusta. She grew up, and became the second wife of Henry Wellesley, the first Lord Cowley.

We have, about this period, from the pen of Miss Burney, another and very interesting court picture; the occasion being the birthday of the little Princess Amelia, the darling of her father and the pet of the courtiers, and the scene the noble terrace at Windsor, where the king delighted to promenade on a summer evening attended by his fine family. On such gala-days it was the cus-

tom for those who enjoyed the king's friendship or favour to repair to the terrace, in order to pay their respect to their sovereign; and accordingly, on the present occasion, thither proceeded the venerable Mrs. Delany, with Miss Burney walking by the side of her sedan-chair, the gift of the king. The authoress of "Evelina," and the contemporary and friend of Swift, had not long been seated on one of the benches on the terrace, when the royal cortège appeared in view. "It was really a mighty pretty procession," writes Miss Burney; "the little princess, just turned of three years old, in a robe-coat covered with fine muslin, a dressed close cap, white gloves and a fan, walked on alone and first, highly delighted in the parade, and turning from side to side to see everybody as she passed; for all the terracers stand up against the walls to make a clear passage for the royal family, the moment they come in sight. Then followed the king and queen, no less delighted themselves with the joy of their little darling." Behind their Majesties walked the Princess Royal, leaning on the arm of Lady Elizabeth Waldegrave; then Princess Augusta, with the mistress of the robes, the Duchess of Ancaster; the Princess Elizabeth with Lady Charlotte Bertie; the Princess Mary with the sub-governess of the princesses, Miss Goldsworthy; the Princess Sophia with Mademoiselle Monmoulin and Miss Planta, English teacher to the two elder princesses; then the master of

the horse, the Duke of Montagu, and General Budé; and lastly, the equerry in waiting, Major Price, whose chief duty it was to prevent the crowd pressing upon the royal family. "On sight of Mrs. Delany," proceeds Miss Burney, "the king instantly stopped to speak to her. The queen, of course, and the little princess, and all the rest, stood still in their ranks. They talked a good deal with the sweet old lady, during which time the king once or twice addressed himself to me. I caught the queen's eye, and saw in it a little surprise, but by no means any displeasure, to see me of the party. The little princess went up to Mrs. Delany, of whom she is very fond, and behaved like a little angel to her. She then, with a look of inquiry and recollection, slowly, of her own accord, came behind Mrs. Delany, to look at me. 'I am afraid,' said I, in a whisper, and stooping down, 'your Royal Highness does not remember me.' What think you was her answer? An arch little smile, and a nearer approach, with her lips pouted out to kiss me. I could not resist so innocent an invitation, but the moment I had accepted it, I was half afraid it might seem, in so public a place, an improper liberty. However, there was no help for it. She then took my fan, and, having looked at it on both sides, gravely returned it to me, saying, 'Oh! a brown fan!' The king and queen then bid her curtsy to Mrs. Delany, which she did most gracefully, and they

all moved on ; each of the princesses speaking to Mrs. Delany as they passed, and condescending to curtsy to her companion."

It was about a year after the date of this scene, that the king, while engaged in conversation with the Duke of York and one or two of the courtiers, happened to rest his arm upon a sun-dial, which is still a prominent object on the terrace at Windsor. The circumstance attracting the attention of the sentinel on duty, the man, though acquainted with the king's person, unhesitatingly walked up to him, and, having intimated that the dial was placed under his especial protection, "desired his Majesty to move away." The order was promptly obeyed by the king, who not only spoke to those about him in terms of high praise of the man's conduct, but the same day sent a message to the colonel of his regiment, desiring that he might be rewarded in such manner as the rules of military service would admit. This anecdote may perhaps remind the reader of a somewhat similar one related by Whitelock of Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell was one evening returning with Ireton from Whitelock's house, where they had supped, when they were stopped and examined by the officer of the guard, who not only refused to believe them when they gave their names, but threatened to send them to the guard-room. Ireton, according to Whitelock, "showed a little anger, but Cromwell was cheerful with the soldiers, and gave them

twenty shillings, and commended them and their captain for doing their duty."

A few days after the scene on the terrace at Windsor the court set out on a second visit to Lord and Lady Harcourt, at Nuneham; this being the same visit of which Miss Burney has given us so entertaining and graphic an account in her "Diary and Letters." Her description of her inhospitable reception on arriving at the "straggling, half-new, half-old, half-comfortable, and half-forlorn mansion," — the undisguised disgust of the spoiled authoress at being handed out of the royal carriage by a common postilion, and not only finding neither the lord nor lady of Nuneham "caring about receiving her," but not even a porter presenting himself at the hall door; the comic gravity with which she recounts the "difficulties and disgraces" to which she was exposed in her helpless search after her apartment; her wanderings through "passages that led to nothing;" the superciliousness with which she imagined herself to be treated by the "prodigious fine yellow-laced" menials, — "superfine men in laced livery," — whom she occasionally encountered, and who were too much occupied by the visit of Majesty, immediately to attend to the authoress of "Evelina;" her dread lest she might be caught in her travelling-dress by a sudden irruption of the royal guests; and lastly, when fairly settled in her apartment, her horror at hearing herself and Miss Planta sum-

moned to the common supper table of the royal attendants by a rude footman screaming out, "The equerries want the ladies!"—afford, unconsciously to herself, as graphic and amusing a delineation of a chapter of accidents as any to which she introduces us amongst the Brangtons and Briggsses in her charming novels of "Evelina" and "Cecilia."

The court arrived at Nuneham on Saturday, the 12th of August, and on the following day, after divine service, the king and queen, accompanied by the Princess Royal, and by the Princesses Augusta and Elizabeth, paid a second visit to Oxford. The royal party were received by the vice-chancellor and the heads of colleges, who conducted them in state to the theatre, which was crowded with spectators. The king took his seat on the chancellor's chair, the queen and princesses sitting below him, to the left. The address, which was read by the vice-chancellor, contained, among other expressions of loyalty, the congratulations of the university to the king on his recent happy deliverance from the knife of Margaret Nicholson; at the same time touching gracefully on the distress which that event must have occasioned the queen, and paying a passing tribute to her amiable character and domestic virtues. The queen was much affected. According to Miss Burney, who was present: "This public tribute of loyalty to the king, and of respect for herself, went gratefully to her heart,

and filled her eyes with tears. She would not however, encourage them, but, smiling through them, dispersed them with her fan, with which she was repeatedly obliged to stop their course down her cheeks." The princesses, less accustomed to control their feelings, almost wept outright. In the course of the afternoon, visits were paid to several of the colleges, after which the royal party returned to dinner at Nuneham.

The following morning was occupied by a visit to Blenheim. The Duke and Duchess of Marlborough received their Majesties at the grand entrance of the mansion, and subsequently conducted them through the princely apartments.¹ Three days afterward, the duchess writes to the Archbishop of Canterbury: "Their Majesties were much pleased with their reception, both at Oxford and here, as they were good enough to say; and, indeed, considering the shortness of the notice, it all went off very well. They stayed here from eleven till six. We had breakfast for them in the library, and, after they returned from seeing the park, some cold meats and fruit. Lord and Lady Harcourt told us we were to sit as lord and lady of the bedchamber all the time they stayed here; and

¹ George, fourth Duke of Marlborough, K. G., a nobleman of learned tastes and retired habits, had carried the sceptre with the cross at the king's coronation. He was born in 1739, and died 29th January, 1817. His duchess was Lady Caroline Russell daughter of John, fourth Duke of Bedford, K. G. She died in 1811.

poor Lord Harcourt seemed quite happy to be able to rest himself, and the Duke of Marlborough found him sitting down behind every door where he could be concealed from royal eyes. We were just an hour going over the principal floor, as they stopped and examined everything in every room; and we never sat down during that hour, or, indeed, very little but while we were in the carriages, which fatigued me more than anything else, as I was not at all well at the time. Lord Harcourt told the Duke of Marlborough that he had been full-dressed in a bag and sword every morning since Saturday; but the Duke of Marlborough could not follow his example in that, as he had no dress-coat or sword in the country. He desires me to tell you that he had no misgivings. All the apprehensions were on my side. Nobody could do the thing better or more thoroughly than he did."

On the 31st of October, 1786, died the king's last surviving aunt, the Princess Amelia, whose birth dated as far back as the reign of Queen Anne.¹ This eccentric lady is principally known to us through the pen of Horace Walpole, who was frequently invited to her loo and commerce parties, and who introduces us to her in more than one graphic passage in his charming letters. Her contemporaries describe her, not only as having

¹ Amelia Sophia Eleonora, second daughter of King George the Second, was born at the palace of Herenhausen, in Hanover, on the 30th of May, 1711.

been handsome in her youth, but also, notwithstanding her refusal of the hands of more than one German prince, as having been no stranger to the tender passion. She is said to have carried on a flirtation with the celebrated minister, Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle; but Charles Fitzroy, second Duke of Richmond, a grandson of Charles the Second, seems to have been the person who inspired her with the strongest attachment. Not only were they in the habit of hunting together three times a week, but the princess, on one occasion, gave great offence to her mother, Queen Caroline, by retiring with the duke from the hunting-field to a private house in Windsor Forest, where they remained quite long enough to afford ground for scandal.

Later in life, the princess seems to have half unsexed herself by the masculine tastes which she had imbibed, and the strange attire which she wore. There is at Hardwicke, in Derbyshire, a portrait of her, in a round hat and laced coat, which it is difficult to believe could have been intended for a woman. Her great-nephew, George the Fourth, when Prince of Wales, used to relate a rather amusing anecdote at his aunt's expense. One cold day, he said, he was driving with Lord Clermont in the neighbourhood of Bagshot, when the singular appearance of the Irish earl, who was wrapped up in a white greatcoat and a kind of flannel hood over his head, so nearly resembled

that of the princess, that he was occasionally mistaken for her by persons whom they met on the road. More than once the prince declared that he overheard the remark: "What a kind young man the prince must be to be so attentive to his deaf old aunt!"

The princess in her youth had been passionately fond of the pleasures of the field, so much so that a great part of her time is said to have been passed in her stables, more especially when any of her horses happened to be ill. Another of her weaknesses was high play at cards, a propensity which had rendered her especially obnoxious to the mother of George the Third, who, as Bubb Dodington informs us, complained bitterly of her sister-in-law playing publicly, and for high stakes, in the rooms at Bath.

A contemporary of the princess writes from Bath, on the 17th of September, 1752: "Her Royal Highness is very affable and civil; comes to the room at noon lately, and sometimes at nights, and plays at cards there, chiefly at commerce. She takes all opportunities, when fair, of getting on horseback, and amuses herself almost every day some hours in angling in the river, in a summer-house by the riverside in the garden, formerly known by the name of Harrison's Walks, which has two fireplaces in it; and, to secure her against cold, puts on a riding-habit, and a black velvet postilion-cap tied under her chin."

The king is said to have entertained but little affection or reverence for his eccentric aunt, a fact doubtless chiefly owing to her inquisitiveness into the affairs of others, her love of tittle-tattle, and an offensive habit, which she had acquired, of saying disagreeable things, from which Majesty itself scarcely seems to have been exempted. According to her contemporaries, the princess was garrulous and false without being pleasing, mischievous without motive, and often insolent without provocation. Yet these grave defects were relieved by many amiable qualities. Her charities were munificent ; her hospitality befitted her high rank ; she was a blind mistress and a steady friend. As she increased in years, she became extremely deaf and short-sighted, yet, according to Walpole, such was the natural quickness of her perception, that she seemed to hear and see better than those whom she conversed with. Her death took place at her house in Cavendish Square,¹ in the seventy-sixth year of her age.

In the meantime, we find the king taking his wonted laudable interest in promoting the welfare and happiness of his people. Not long before the period of which we are treating, Robert Raikes,

¹ Her residence was the corner house of Cavendish Square and Harley Street. It has since been successively inhabited by Mr. Hope, Mr. Watson Taylor, and Marshal Beresford. On the evening of the 11th of November, the remains of the princess were interred in Henry the Seventh's chapel at Westminster.

the philanthropic printer of Gloucester, had successfully carried out his admirable plan for improving the religious and moral condition of the poor, by means of Sunday-schools. The king and queen not only took a deep interest in its success, but Mr. Raikes was invited to Windsor, where, in a long interview with her Majesty, he explained the objects which he had in view, and the principles on which he acted. It happened that one of his most zealous and active followers in this work of love was the once celebrated Sarah Trimmer, between whom and the royal family some kind of acquaintance already existed. She was the daughter of the late ingenious Joshua Kirby, who, from the humble position of a house-painter in a village in Suffolk, had raised himself to be an artist of no mean reputation. Some of his drawings had the good fortune to attract the attention of the then powerful favourite, Lord Bute, who, to his credit, obtained for him the appointment of clerk of the works at Kew Palace, where he had the honour of instructing the queen in the art of drawing in perspective. Kirby at this time was no more;¹ but his daughter, Mrs. Trimmer, was residing at Brentford, on the opposite side of the river to Kew, where she was actively employed in super-

¹ It was by Kirby that the great painter, Thomas Gainsborough was introduced to George the Third. By the express desire of Gainsborough his remains were subsequently laid by those of his friend in Kew churchyard, where also repose the remains of Zoffani.

intending the Sunday and industrial schools which she had been the principal means of establishing. She was easy of access, therefore, to the king and queen, with the latter of whom she seems to have been more especially in communication. "I have this day," writes the benevolent lady in her journal, "had the unexpected honour of attending her Majesty, and had inexpressible pleasure in her sensible, humane, and truly Christian conversation. May her pious design of establishing Sunday-schools at Windsor be put in execution!" Again, Mrs. Trimmer writes to a friend: "Some time in the last autumn I received a message from the queen, desiring me to attend her at a certain hour; and I accordingly waited on her Majesty, who received me with the most condescending kindness, told me she had heard of the success of the schools under my inspection, and, being very anxious for their establishment at Windsor, desired to have information from me on the subject. I was honoured with a conference of two hours. It is impossible to do justice to the charming manner in which the queen expressed the most benevolent sentiments and the tenderest regard for the happiness of the poor." The king himself, on one occasion, visited the school of industry at Brentford, where we find him winning the hearts of the children by his kind and condescending behaviour. "A general joy," writes Mrs. Trimmer, "prevails among the conductors of Sunday-schools."

In January, the following year, the king, under the name of Ralph Robinson, addressed to Arthur Young, the agriculturist, certain letters on practical agriculture and the errors in the prevailing system of farming. In addition to his farms at Windsor, the king had converted a portion of Richmond New Park into arable land; he also held under his own management the whole of the Old or Deer Park at Richmond, and farmed a tract of ground known as Keel's Farm, in the adjoining parish of Mortlake. "The ground, like man," said the king, "was never meant to be idle; if it does not produce something useful, it will be overrun with weeds." By degrees, the deep and active interest taken by the king in agricultural improvements produced the most beneficial effects throughout the country, and eventually led to the formation of the General Board of Agriculture. In the words of the Quarterly Reviewer, "The wise and benevolent example set by the monarch speedily spread its salutary influence. The spirit of rural improvement, having been engendered and fostered in the royal shades of Windsor, made its way, first to Woburn, then to Holkham and Petworth, whence it gradually penetrated the most distant and secluded corners of the island. The owners and occupiers of land, throughout the country, were effectually roused from the unprofitable lethargy in which they and their predecessors had so long slumbered. They were taught to appreciate the

hitherto neglected resources of their paternal domains, and the light, which thus unexpectedly burst upon them, led to improvements more various, more important, and more beneficial to the public, than any change which had taken place in this country during the lapse of the ten previous centuries."

About this time also we find the king taking an active interest in the benevolent exertions of John Howard to ameliorate the abuses of prison discipline; receiving the philanthropist at a private interview at Windsor, and subsequently heading a subscription for erecting a statue in his honour. This homage to his virtues was modestly declined by Howard, apparently with his Majesty's full approval. "Howard," said the king, "wants no statue. His virtues will live when every statue has crumbled into dust." Some time afterward the king showed his respect for literature by knighting the learned Sir John Fenn, now principally known as the editor of the "Paston Letters."

The society in which the king principally took a pleasure was that of such men as the erudite and amiable prelates, Hurd and Fisher, Bishops of Worcester and Salisbury. Learning and virtue, combined, were certain to meet with kindness and encouragement at his hands. Under his own roof, at Windsor Castle, we find him at this period sociably enjoying the conversation, from time to time, of Sir Joseph Banks, of John Lightfoot, the

eminent botanist, and of Jacob Bryant, the learned author of the "Analysis of Ancient Mythology." M. Argent was invited to Windsor to explain his scientific experiments ; Herschel, to display and expound his wonderful experiments in the heavens ; while Mrs. Siddons still continued to charm the royal family with her unrivalled dramatic readings.

In the summer of this year we find the king renewing his acquaintance with the amiable Doctor Beattie, the author of "The Minstrel," whose existence he had rendered easy by settling on him a pension of two hundred a year. The poet, as he himself informs us, had been induced to visit Windsor for a few days, partly to enjoy the society of some friends, among whom was Mrs. Delany, and partly for the purpose of paying his respects to the king and queen. The first time he encountered the king was on the terrace. His Majesty knew him immediately, received him in the most gracious manner, and detained him for a considerable time in conversation. The next morning, after having attended prayers in the king's private chapel, his Majesty presented him to the queen, who received him no less graciously — making kind inquiries after his health, and referring to the many years that had passed since they had last conversed together at Kew. The queen then curtsied slightly, and, followed by the Princess Elizabeth, entered her carriage, which was waiting at the chapel door. "The king," writes Doctor Beattie,

“remained with us some time longer, and talked of various matters, particularly the union of the colleges.¹ He asked whether I was for or against it. I told him I was a friend to the union. ‘But Lord Kinnoul,’ said he, ‘is violent against it.’ This, by the by, I did not know before. The king spoke jocularly of my having become fat. ‘I remember the time,’ said he, ‘when you were as lean as Doctor — there,’ pointing to a gentleman who was standing by. ‘You look very well,’ said his Majesty to me; ‘and I am convinced you are well, if you would only think so.’ Then turning to Doctor Heberden,² who was also standing near, ‘Do, Doctor Heberden,’ he said, ‘convince Doctor Beattie that he is in perfect health.’ ‘I have been endeavouring Sir,’ replied the doctor, ‘to do so.’”

A few days afterward, on the annual occasion of “Election Monday” at Eton, we find the king present at the delivery of the “speeches” by the scholars of his favourite school. To the Bishop of Worcester he writes, on the 29th of July, 1787:

¹ The king alluded to a plan, which had been much discussed about this time, of uniting the King’s and Marischal Colleges of Old and New Aberdeen. A petition to the king in favour of the union had been signed by all the dignitaries of Marischal College, while, on the other hand, it was opposed by the principal and six of the professors of King’s College.

² Dr. William Heberden, the distinguished physician. Much of the last part of his life was passed at Windsor, where he died, May 17, 1801.

“ Having heard from Doctor Langford ¹ that he sets out to-morrow for Worcester, I cannot omit so favourable an opportunity of inquiring after your health. I shall to-morrow attend the speeches at Eton, as I wish from time to time to show a regard for the education of youth, on which most essentially depend my hopes of an advantageous change in the manners of the nation. You may easily imagine that I am not a little anxious for the next week, when Frederick will return, from whom I have great reason to expect much comfort. The accounts of the three at Göttingen are very favourable. The youngest ² has written to me to express a wish to be publicly examined by the two curators of that university, on the commemoration in September, when it will have subsisted fifty years. I have taken the hint, and have directed all three to be examined on that solemn occasion.”

Exactly ten years had passed since the king had listened, in the Eton schoolroom, to the early eloquence of the Marquis Wellesley, then Lord Mornington,³ and now it was his fortune to listen

¹ William Langford, D.D., lower master of Eton School from 1775 to 1802, Canon of Windsor, and Vicar of Isleworth. He died in 1814.

² H. R. H. the late Duke of Cambridge.

³ Lord Wellesley, as has been already related, delivered Lord Strafford's speech at his trial, and this with such pathos as to draw tears from the eyes of the king. Lord Wellesley used to mention that after the speeches he was taken by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Doctor Cornwallis, to Lambeth Palace, where he was to pass his holidays. On their way to London they called upon

to the first oratorical efforts of George Canning.¹ "The speeches," writes the authoress of "Evelina," who was present, "were chiefly in Greek and Latin, but concluded with three or four in English. Some were pronounced extremely well, especially those spoken by the chief composers of the *Microcosm*, Canning and Smith." Another scholar, who acquitted himself well on the occasion, was a son of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Doctor Moore. "Charles," writes the primate to Mr. Eden, "is said to have spoken well. It was part of one of Tully's orations against Antony.

David Garrick, at his villa at Hampton. "Your lordship," said the great actor to Lord Wellesley, "has done what I could never accomplish, — made the king weep." "That," replied Lord Wellesley, with admirable quickness, "is because you never spoke before him in the character of a fallen favourite."

¹ Canning was the editor of the *Microcosm*, a once famous periodical, in which John Hookham Frere, and a few others of his schoolfellows, were his fellow-labourers. The "Smith" whose name is coupled with that of Canning by Miss Burney was apparently Robert Percy Smith, familiarly known in our own time as "Bobus Smith," — the "Bobus always merry and always kind," the "Long live Bobus!" of Sir James Mackintosh's Diaries. This accomplished scholar and charming companion, who was the elder brother of the Rev. Sydney Smith, after nine years' service as Advocate-General of Bengal, returned to England, and sat in Parliament successively as member for Tralee, Grantham, and Lincoln. Miss Burney writes, in November, 1786: "I read once more in the morning to the queen, a paper of the *Microcosm*, which I forget whether I have mentioned. It is a periodical imitation of other periodical papers, and written by a set of Eton scholars. It has great merit for such youthful composers."

I have heard much praise from the king, and a fair portion from others."

The queen's birthday, in the preceding year, had been solemnised at St. James's Palace with the usual rejoicings. Yet, pleasant as it was to behold her Majesty surrounded by her blooming and beautiful daughters, the scene was saddened in the eyes of many by the absence of the handsome face and showy form of the heir to the throne. The prince had, indeed, written to congratulate his mother on the occasion, but the prodigal son was still estranged from the hearth of his parents. The queen, though she retained her accustomed composure, seems to have severely felt his absence. She had been fonder and prouder of him than of any of her other children, and consequently his continued misconduct, and alienation from his family, had occasioned her the deepest distress. Miss Burney, for instance, mentions an occasion of the queen's visible emotion on reading a paper in the *Tatler*, descriptive of a young man, of naturally warm affections and sweet disposition, being hurried into a career of dissipation, which in his soberer moments filled his mind with remorse. "All the mother," writes Miss Burney, "was in her voice while she read it, and her glistening eyes told the application made throughout."

Happily, not many months from this time, the queen's heart was gladdened by a reconciliation taking place between her husband and son. The

prince's return to obedience, however, appears to have been somewhat expensively purchased by the king's consenting to settle on him an additional £10,000 a year out of the civil list, and also authorising an application being made to Parliament to discharge his debts; the prince, on his part, pledging his "fullest assurances" to the House of Commons that his future expenses should be confined within his income.

The prince's liabilities, it should be mentioned, amounted to £193,648, a considerable sum, at this time, for a youth of twenty-four to have incurred, yet trifling when compared with the enormous disbursements which, despite the guarantee now given by him to Parliament, his extravagances subsequently entailed upon the country. At all events, peace and unity were for the present restored to the royal family. On the 25th of May, an interview of three hours' duration took place at Buckingham House between the king and the prince, at the close of which the former conducted his apparently contrite son to the presence of his mother and sisters. "I am told," writes General Cunninghame to Mr. Eden, "the prince is resolved never again to quarrel with his father. Yesterday the drawing-room was fine, and crowded as a birthday. The prince's household all kissed hands. The queen and princesses seemed delighted, and the king very cheerful." Three weeks afterward, we find the prince the king's companion

in his evening walk on the terrace at Windsor, where, by their frequently and familiarly joining in conversation, they afforded public and pleasing evidence of the reconciliation which had taken place.

If anything, at this time, was wanting to complete the king's satisfaction, it was the expected return from Germany, after a long absence, of his favourite son, the Duke of York, now in his twenty-fourth year. "This day three weeks," writes the duke to Sir Robert Keith, on the 1st of July, "I shall set off upon my return home. It is not necessary, I am sure, to express to you how impatient I am to return, as it is near seven long years since I left England." All the duke's contemporaries speak of him at this period as a warm-hearted, manly, unaffected, and unsophisticated youth. His affections, unlike those of his brilliant brother, had not as yet been deadened by a daily intercourse with the profligate and the selfish. We are not surprised, then, at the ardent satisfaction which was depicted in his countenance when, as Miss Burney describes him, he bounded joyously from his carriage at the old porch in the quadrangle at Windsor Castle, eager to embrace his mother and sisters, and to grasp by the hand the partial father by whom he was almost idolised. There were, indeed, grave persons under the royal roof, who whispered their apprehensions that evil communications were calculated to corrupt good manners,

and that, ere long, the pernicious example of the heir to the throne might possibly undermine the amiable qualities of his frank and open-hearted brother. For a season, however, all was rejoicing and congratulation in the king's palace. The queen, carefully as she had tutored herself to conceal her emotions, betrayed, on the duke's arrival, touching evidences of a mother's gratitude and joy. The princesses are described as having been "in one universal rapture." But it was the exuberance of delight, manifested by the king on embracing his long-absent son, which made the deepest impression upon those who were witnesses of their meeting. According to the excellent Mr. Smelt, who had been the duke's sub-governor, "He never could forget the day when the king brought the Duke of York to see him after his arrival from Germany. It was not pleasure that beamed in the king's eye, it was ecstasy." On the evening of the day on which the duke arrived at Windsor, we find the king taking a pardonable pleasure and pride in parading his manly son upon the crowded terrace. "It was indeed an affecting sight," writes Miss Burney, "to view the general content. But that of the king went to my very heart. So delighted he looked ; so proud of his son ; so benevolently pleased that every one should witness his satisfaction. The terrace was very full. All Windsor and its neighbourhood poured in upon it to see the prince, whose whole demeanour seemed prom-

ising to merit his flattering reception; gay, yet grateful; modest, yet unembarrassed.”¹

A redeeming feature in the character of the Prince of Wales was his early friendship and affection for his brother Frederick. Accordingly, the news of the duke's arrival no sooner reached him at Brighton, than he sent off excuses to the Princesse de Lamballe, and a brilliant party who were engaged to sup with him, and, having travelled during the remainder of the night, arrived at Windsor at eight o'clock in the morning. The king had formerly loved his eldest son almost as much as he loved the duke, and consequently it must have been a source of double gratification to him to be able to entertain, at the same time, and under the same roof, the son to whom he had been so recently reconciled, and the son from whom he had so long been separated. Miss Burney describes him as having been in a constant “transport of delight.” There never, said the Princess Augusta, had been so happy a dinner since the world was created. Two birthdays followed, — that of the Prince of Wales on the 12th of August, and of the Duke of

¹ The Archbishop of Canterbury was disappointed in the personal appearance of the newly arrived duke. To Mr. Eden he writes, on the 15th of August: “The Duke of York does not come up to the expectations I had formed, in his personal appearance. It is like that of any other young officer you meet, neither *l'air noble* nor *militaire*. He stoops much, which I never saw in a German officer before; and therefore I wonder, because he has been living with German officers.”

York on the 16th, — both of which were of course celebrated with extraordinary rejoicings.

In the meantime, we find the venerable Mrs. Delany, whose days were now calmly drawing toward a close, continuing to receive from the king and queen the most gratifying proofs of their affection and respect. She has "the great privilege and happiness," she writes, "of spending three or four evenings a week at the Queen's Lodge;" indeed, so domesticated had she become with the royal family, that, on an occasion of the court quitting Windsor for London, though only for three days, she describes herself as feeling "desolate." "The king and queen," writes one of her old friends, "and all the younger branches, increase in affection and respect to Mrs. Delany. She breakfasted with them yesterday, and the king always makes her lean upon his arm." She herself bears frequent and grateful testimony to the great kindness of the royal family. "If I had strength of spirits," she writes, "to communicate to you the unremitting honours and favours I have received from my royal friends, it would be a mutual gratification to us both; but that I do not feel myself equal to." And again she writes: "I do not know how to particularise the condescending goodness which I daily experience; and it is a matter of real astonishment to me, so unqualified as I am, and under the load of years and some infirmities, that I should receive so many

unremitting marks of favour. But, the truth is, the love of giving comfort and bestowing happiness seems to predominate in the hearts of my royal friends."

About this period occurred a somewhat amusing incident, connected with one of the king's unannounced visits to Mrs. Delany. Apparently finding the drawing-room untenanted, he knocked at the door of an apartment in which were a beautiful young niece of Mrs. Delany and another female. "Who is there?" was the inquiry from within. "It is me," replied the king. "Then," said the young lady, "Me may stay where he is." Again the king knocked. Again the young lady inquired who it was. Again the reply was, "It is me." "Then," she said, "Me is impertinent, and may go about his business." Still the king continued to knock, when the other person in the room advised the young lady to open the door, and see who it could possibly be. To her dismay and astonishment, she discovered it was the king. All she could exclaim was, "What shall I say?" "Say nothing," said the good-natured monarch; "you were very right to be cautious as to whom you admitted."

The following further trifling anecdote is related of the king, at this period. Lady Cecilia Leeson, daughter of the Earl of Miltown, was reported to have accepted the addresses of Mr. David Latouche, an Irish gentleman, whom she afterward

married. The king, in the course of conversation with the young lady, put some questions to her on the subject, and, amongst others, asked her when she had last heard from her lover. "Well, now," was the brusque reply, "what's that to you?" "Probably," writes Storer to Mr. Eden, then ambassador to Spain, "she had not lived in a court so much as you are doing now."

Mrs. Delany died, without the slightest struggle or suffering, on the 15th of April, 1788, in the eighty-ninth year of her age. "Alas!" writes Hannah More to her sister, "Mrs. Delany is dead. She was perfectly sensible, holding a gentleman by the hand, and telling him how full her life had been of blessings, and that what she had to look forward to was still inexpressibly happier than all she had already enjoyed." The last name which she mentioned to Miss Burney, on the night of her death, was that of the king. To his Majesty, she gratefully bequeathed a picture of grapes, by Michael Angelo Caravaggio, and to the queen a box, containing a miniature of the late Duchess of Portland, and some of her Grace's hair in a cipher. The king showed his regard for Mrs. Delany's memory, by providing for her faithful attendant, Anne Astley, who tended her to the last.

The following further extracts from the king's letters are selected as displaying the steady and wise interest which he continued to take in the affairs of Church and state.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

(Extract.)

"WINDSOR, July 3, 1786.

"I return the letters from Mendiola, and approve the disclaiming in the strongest manner all idea of interfering in the discontents of the inhabitants of the Spanish settlements in South America. As I have ever thought the conduct of France in North America unjustifiable, I certainly can never copy so faithless an example."

The King to Mr. Pitt.

"January 22, 1787.

"MR. PITT : — By your note, which met me as I was riding to town, I find the Bishop of Peterborough declines the deanery of St. Paul's, and that this has made you renew your application for Doctor Pretzman. I see you have it so much at heart, that I cannot let my reason guide me against my inclination to oblige you. I therefore consent to his having this deanery with the bishopric of Lincoln, though I am confident it will be, by all but those concerned, thought very unreasonable, and I should fear will serve as a precedent to the like applications. While desires increase, the means of satisfying people have been much diminished."

The King to Mr. Pitt.

“October 12, 1787.

“I cannot return to the secretary of state’s office the very material papers, on the plans of France with regard to India, without sending Mr. Pitt a few lines. I should hope he will acquaint the Cabinet to-morrow that I am forming four regiments for that service, and that he will push on a negotiation with M. Boers to make the two companies understand one another, and take efficient measures to secure us against our insidious neighbours. Perhaps no part of the change in Holland is so material to this country as the gaining that republic as an ally in India. I recommend that no time should be lost in bringing this to bear, and our company ought to be liberal in its offers to effect it.”

The following letter from the king has reference to a narrow escape from defeat, which ministers experienced in the House of Commons on the 5th of March, 1788, during the discussions on the “India Declaratory Bill.” Pitt had been prevented by sudden indisposition from replying to a very able speech of Fox; the result being that, when the members came to a division, it was with the magic of Fox’s eloquence deeply impressed upon their minds, and with his arguments virtually unanswered. “I think,” writes William Grenville to

his brother, Lord Buckingham, "this is the most unpleasant thing of the sort that has happened to us."

The King to Mr. Pitt.

"March 6, 1788.

"I have delayed acknowledging the receipt of Mr. Pitt's note, informing me of the division in the House of Commons this morning, lest he might have been disturbed when it would have been highly inconvenient. It is amazing how, on a subject that could be reduced into so small a compass, the House would hear such long speaking. The object of opposition was evidently to oblige the old and infirm members to give up the attendance, which is reason sufficient for the friends of government to speak merely to the point in future, and try to shorten debates, and bring, if possible, the present bad mode of mechanical oratory into discredit."

The fact is, that the illness of the prime minister was occasioned by a debauch, in which he had been induced to indulge on the preceding night. "On last Wednesday," writes Lord Bulkeley to the Marquis of Buckingham, on the 10th, "Mr. Pitt experienced a mortification, not only from the abilities of those who oppose him, but from the defection of some of his friends, and the lukewarmness of others, that he has not experienced since he has been a minister. It was an awkward day for him,

and he felt it the more because he himself was low-spirited and overcome by the heat of the house, in consequence of having got drunk the night before at your house, in Pall Mall, with Mr. Dundas and the Duchess of Gordon.¹ They must have had a hard bout of it, for even Dundas, who is well used to the bottle, was affected by it, and spoke remarkable ill, tedious, and dull. The opposition therefore made the most of their advantages, and raked Pitt, fore and aft, in such a manner as evidently made an impress on him. I heard from our own friends that no minister ever cut a more pitiful figure." Pitt, however, two days afterward, amply recovered the ground which he had lost, by making "one of the best and most masterly speeches" he ever delivered.

The King to the Countess Howe.

"QUEEN'S HOUSE, May 8, 1788, $\frac{m}{53}$ p^t 6 P. M.

"I have delivered the letter to the queen, and explained the mistake by which it had been opened, but cannot pretend that any eloquence of mine was necessary to convince the queen that no disrespect was meant by Lord Howe; for we both think we know him too well ever to harbour such an idea,

¹ Lord Temple's house, in Pall Mall, now forming a portion of the War Department, was at this time let on hire to Alexander, Duke of Gordon, whose witty and eccentric duchess was the lady mentioned in the text.

even where appearances could give room for doubt. Indeed, honesty is the best policy; and, where uniformity of conduct is to be found, that gives due reason to guess at the motives of action.

“GEORGE R.”

CHAPTER VI.

Conduct of the Prince of Wales — His Evil Influence on the Duke of York — Society at Brighton under the Auspices of the Prince — Approach of the King's Mental Malady — His Visit to Cheltenham — Excursions — The Duke of York's Flying Visit — The King's Visits to Hartlebury, Worcester, and Matson — Return to Windsor — The King's Approaching Insanity First Suspected by Mrs. Siddons — His Altered Manner at the Levee — His Desire to Conceal His Sufferings — Progress of the Disease — Attacked with Delirium — Distress of the Queen — Fears of the Physicians — Captain Payne's Account of the King's Condition — The King's Sudden Appearance among the Princes and Others in an Adjoining Apartment — Alarm of the Party — Conduct of Colonel Digby.

NOTWITHSTANDING the promises of amendment which had been made by the Prince of Wales at the time of his reconciliation to his father, and the good resolutions which at that time he possibly, in all sincerity, formed, it seems to have been little more than ten months before he relapsed into his former habits of extravagant dissipation and political hostility to his father. In March, 1788, for instance, we find him obstructing Mr. Pitt during the progress of the India Declaratory Bill through the House of Commons, and, in July following, interfering in the Westminster election.

On the first of these occasions it was under no very creditable circumstances. The East India Company having petitioned against the bill, Erskine was heard as their counsel at the bar of the Commons. He had spoken with little effect for nearly three hours, when he became so indisposed as to be compelled to defer the delivery of the remainder of his speech till a later hour. He was well enough, however, to dine in the coffee-room of the House of Commons with the Prince of Wales, who, it is said, "primed" him with brandy, with apparently no other object than that of inciting him to run riot against the government. "Erskine," writes Lord Mornington to the Marquis of Buckingham, "spoke for near two hours, and delivered the most stupid, gross, and indecent libel against Pitt that ever was imagined. The abuse was so monstrous that the House hissed him." Pitt, according to Lord Mornington, took no notice of Erskine's "Billingsgate."

But if the conduct of the Prince of Wales was a source of distress to the king, how much more afflicted must he have been at the altered behaviour of his beloved son, the Duke of York! Those who had augured that the better principles of the young prince would yield to the malign example of others, had unfortunately proved only too correct in their predictions. Scarcely had he been four months in England when we find Storer writing to Mr. Eden, that the duke's amours had

been "numerous hitherto ;" at the same time accurately foretelling that before the end of the winter he would entangle himself with "*une habitude*." This anticipated *habitude* proved to be the Countess of Tryconnel, whose visits we subsequently find Mrs. Fitzherbert declining to receive, on the ground of her being a lady of "contaminate" character, — thus very nearly occasioning a "fracas" between the Prince of Wales and his brother. So far, great excuse is to be made for the duke on the score of his youth and the contagious immorality of the age; observing that even his sober and phlegmatic uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, notoriously had his *habitude*, in the person of a very beautiful woman, Lady Almeria Carpenter, lady of the bedchamber to his duchess.¹ But, in other respects, the conduct of the Duke of York was calculated greatly to grieve and alarm his indulgent father. "I am told," writes Lord Bulkeley to Lord Buckingham, "that the king and queen now begin to feel

"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child!"

"The Duke of York," writes Lord Bulkeley, on another occasion, "in politics talks both ways, and, I think, will end in opposition. His conduct

¹ We have the direct authority of the duchess's uncle, Horace Walpole, for the fact that his beautiful niece was subjected to this indignity.

is as bad as possible. He plays very deep, and loses ; and his company is thought *mauvais ton*." Even the Prince of Wales, though his own *ton* was certainly not of the most refined order, is said to have denounced his brother's style as "too bad." "The Prince of Wales," writes William Grenville to Lord Buckingham, "has taken this year very much to play, and has gone so far as to win or lose £2,000 or £3,000 in a night. He is now, together with the Duke of York, forming a new club at Weltzie's ; and this will probably be the scene of some of the highest gaming which has been seen in town."¹

From the pen of General Grenville, who had attended the Duke of York during his sojourn in Germany, and who for several years remained at the head of his Royal Highness's establishment, we glean some further particulars respecting the proceedings of the royal brothers. For instance, on the 20th of December, 1787, he writes to Lord Cornwallis : "We are totally guided by the [Prince of Wales], and thoroughly initiated into all the extravagances and debaucheries of this most virtuous metropolis. Our visits to Windsor are less frequent, and, I am afraid, will at last be totally given up." So also General Grant writes to Lord Cornwallis, April 6, 1788 : "At the Irish

¹ Weltzie's Club stood on the west side of St. James's Street, on the site (1866) of Fenton's Hotel. Weltzie, the proprietor, had been house steward to the Prince of Wales.

Club we have been honoured with the presence of the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, who are reciprocally obliged to one another. The prince has taught the duke to drink in the most liberal and copious way ; and the duke, in return, has been equally successful in teaching his brother to lose his money at all sorts of play, — quinze, hazard, etc., — to the amount, as we are told, of very large sums in favour of India General Smith and Admiral Pigot, who wanted it very much. These play-parties have chiefly taken place at a new club, formed this winter by the Prince of Wales, in opposition to Brooks's, because Tarleton and Jack Payne, proposed by his Royal Highness, were black-balled." Nevertheless, General Grenville was not altogether without hope that his royal charge might yet be weaned from his evil courses. Four days after the date of General Grant's letter to Lord Cornwallis, he writes to that nobleman : "I am sorry to say that we still go on at a most furious rate ; and I cannot but lament most sincerely certain parts of our conduct, which I hope we shall correct before it is too late. That very strong passion for gaming, which I always foresaw would be the rock which we should most likely split upon, has broken out with all the violence I apprehended ; and the too frequent opportunities which offer for indulging it fill me with the most serious apprehensions. What a pity it is that, with such excellent parts,

and with a disposition calculated to make everybody about him happy and contented, he should be so led away by his passions as to lose the finest game that ever presented itself to a person of his rank and situation. I do not, however, by any means despair."

Notwithstanding the salutary influence which Mrs. Fitzherbert was supposed to exercise over the mind of the heir to the throne, the prince's favourite marine residence, Brighton, appears to have been no less notable as the scene of his irregularities than either Carlton House or the clubs in the neighbourhood of St. James's. The following, for instance, is a picture of the Steyne, as it presented itself to Storer in the autumn of 1788. "It seemed as if all the gayest and the prettiest women in England, of a certain class, had come to market on the Steyne. Authorised by the royal example, everybody thought himself at liberty to do as the prince himself did. Every votary at Mrs. Weston's court thought herself as good, in some respects, as the lady who seemed to hold the first rank in the place. It was curious to observe, at the playhouse, the climax of immorality, from the lowest to the first, ranged around the boxes. But nothing was so singular here as to see our friend, Lord Brudenell,¹ in so new a point

¹ James, Lord Brudenell, afterward fifth Earl of Cardigan, keeper of the privy purse to George the Third. He was born on the 10th of April, 1725, and consequently was at this period

of view. He was living with all these fair nymphs in the easiest manner. How far his virtue was in danger I will not pretend to say ; but if Cato could not trust himself at Baïæ, I should think his lordship runs some risk at Brighthelmstone. He is now no longer called his Honour, but the familiar appellation of Cockie is substituted in its stead." Nearly at this time we find the prince attending a prize-fight at Brighton, at which one of the combatants was killed by the other. For a long time past, in fact, his habits, and the kind of company which enjoyed his favour, seem to have rendered the place uninhabitable by the respectable portion of the community. "The heir apparent," writes the Duke of Dorset, in October, 1786, "is still at Brighton, and drives the whole world away."

To what extent the misconduct of the sons of George the Third may have occasioned or aggravated the terrible mental malady by which, soon after this period, he was afflicted, it would of course be very difficult to determine. Up to the summer of 1788 he had for many years been blessed with uninterrupted good health. "The king," writes Storer, on the 18th of January, "walks twelve miles on his way from Windsor to London,

in his sixty-fourth year. He married, first, in 1760, Anna, sister of William, second Earl of Dartmouth ; and secondly, in 1791, Elizabeth, sister of George, fourth Earl of Waldegrave. He died February 24, 1811.

which is more than the Prince of Wales can do *à l'heure qui est.*" Early in June, however, the king complained of symptoms which were manifestly premonitory of the great infliction which was impending over him, and which induced his physicians to recommend him to try the effect of the Cheltenham waters. In the following letter, — addressed to the friend whom the king probably most venerated in the world, — he communicates the double fact of his illness and of his approaching visit to Gloucestershire :

The King to the Bishop of Worcester.

"WINDSOR, June 8, 1788.

"MY GOOD LORD : — Having had rather a smart bilious attack, which, by the goodness of divine Providence, is quite removed, Sir George Baker¹ has strongly recommended to me the go-

¹ Physician in ordinary to the king, and physician to the queen. In 1776 he was created a baronet, and in 1797 was elected president of the College of Physicians. He was a fine classical scholar, and exemplary in all the relations of private life. Gray paid him the high compliment of dedicating to him his "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard." "No man," writes Nichols, "perhaps, ever followed the career of physic, and the elegant paths of the Greek or Roman Muses, for the space of several years, with more success than Sir George Baker, the proofs of which may be seen in his published and unpublished works, the splendour of his fortune, the esteem, respect, and admiration of his contemporaries." His death took place on the 15th of June, 1809.

ing for a month to Cheltenham, as he thinks that water efficacious on such occasions, and that an absence from London will keep me free from certain fatigues that attend long audiences. I shall therefore go there on Saturday.

"I am certain you know the regard that both the queen and I have for you, and that it will be peculiarly agreeable to us to see you at Hartlebury.¹ I shall certainly omit the waters some morning to undertake so charming a party; but that you may know the whole of my schemes, besides getting that day a breakfast there, I mean to remind you that feeding the hungry is among the Christian duties, and that therefore, when I shall visit the cathedral on the day of the sermon for the benefit of the children of the clergy of the three choirs (which Doctor Langford, as one of the stewards, will get advanced to Wednesday, the 6th of August, as I shall return on the 10th to Windsor), I shall hope to have a little cold meat at your palace before I return to Cheltenham, on Friday, the 8th.

"I shall also come to the performance of the 'Messiah,' and shall hope to have the same hospitable assistance. Both days I shall come to the episcopal palace sufficiently early, that I may from thence be in the cathedral by the time appointed for the performances in the church. The post waits for my letter. I therefore can only

¹ Hartlebury Castle, the palace of the see of Worcester.

add, that I ever remain, with true regard, and I may say affection, my good lord,

“Truly your good friend,

“GEORGE R.

*“To the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Worcester,
Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire.*

On the 12th of July the court quitted Windsor for Cheltenham, the king, in every town and village through which he passed, receiving the most gratifying proofs of the affection and loyalty of his subjects. The residence which had been provided for him was Bays' Hill Lodge, a seat of the Earl of Fauconberg, about a quarter of a mile from Cheltenham, charmingly situated amidst beautifully variegated uplands, with the hills of Malvern rising in the distance. The house, however, was so inconveniently small, and consequently so deficient in the accommodation suitable to a court, that the royal suite was necessarily restricted to a very limited number, the king being the only male person who slept in the lodge. Nevertheless, so secure did he feel himself in the midst of his subjects, that by his express orders not a soldier was allowed to be quartered within ten miles of Cheltenham. “The queen,” writes Storer, “will dine with her equerries, though at first coming into this country German etiquette prevented her from sitting at her table with much greater personages than either Mr. Digby or Mr. Gwynn. The latter

of these two gentlemen likes a good dinner, which, however, he is not in the way of getting the whole time he remains at Cheltenham. His Majesty, sitting a very little time at table and eating very sparingly, hinders the poor equerry, who is helped last, from taking the quantity of food necessary to appease his appetite."

During his stay at Cheltenham the king drank the waters at six o'clock every morning, after which he paraded the "Walks" like any ordinary visitor in search of pleasure or health. As was his practice on the terrace at Windsor, he usually walked with the queen leaning on his arm, their five daughters accompanying them, and the courtiers following behind. At first the king seems to have experienced a good deal of inconvenience from the crowds of persons who flocked to the "Walks;" but so long as he beheld his subjects pleased, by being able to display their loyalty or gratify their curiosity, the good-natured monarch made no complaint. "For two or three days," he observed to the queen, "we must walk about to please these good people, and then we may walk about to please ourselves."

During the king's stay at Cheltenham he made various excursions to objects of interest in the neighbourhood. On the 19th of July he visited Oakley Grove, the seat of Earl Bathurst, consecrated by the genius of Pope, Prior, Bolingbroke, and Atterbury. On the 21st he was conducted

through the Abbey Church of Tewkesbury, rich with romantic associations of the Middle Ages. At Gloucester he was received in state by Bishop Halifax and the dean and chapter, and has himself recorded his admiration of their "truly beautiful" cathedral. On the 26th he visited Croome Court, the seat of the Earl of Coventry, and wandered among the flower-beds of the beautiful Countess Maria of Mason's verse. But the event which evidently gratified him the most, during his sojourn at Cheltenham, was a flying visit paid him by the Duke of York. Reprehensible as the duke's conduct had recently been, the king's forgiving heart still yearned for the society of the best-beloved of all his sons, and accordingly we find him affectionately making preparations for his comfort during his expected visit. In a residence so small that the king was reduced to be its sole male inhabitant, there was, of course, no accommodation for the Duke of York, and consequently, in order to secure for himself as much as possible the company of his beloved son during his brief sojourn at Cheltenham, the king, at a considerable cost of labour and money, caused a portable wooden house to be removed from the farther end of Cheltenham to the pleasure-grounds of Bays' Hill Lodge, to be used as the temporary abode of the duke and his attendants. Miss Burney, who witnessed his arrival, describes the king's joy as scarcely less excessive than that which he had

exhibited when, a year previously, she had seen the duke arrive at Windsor, after his long absence in Germany. The volatile young prince, however, could be persuaded to remain no longer than a single night at Cheltenham. Military business, he declared, required his attendance on the following day, Sunday ; but, in order to be able to spend a second evening with his parents, he would travel, he said, all night. "I wonder," observed the queen's vice-chamberlain, Colonel Digby, "how these princes, who are thus forced to steal even their travelling from their sleep, find time to say their prayers !"

On the 2d of August the king, notwithstanding Hartlebury Castle was thirty-three miles distant, set out on his promised visit to his old friend and favourite, Bishop Hurd. A few days previously, he had written to the bishop : "The cathedral [at Gloucester] is truly beautiful. I am to attend divine service there on Sunday. To-morrow is the visit to Croome, which enables me to fix on Saturday, the 2d of August, for visiting Hartlebury Castle, where any arrangements for the 6th at Worcester may be explained. All here are well, and insisted on seeing yesterday the room Doctor Hurd used to inhabit at Gloucester. The bishop was obliged to explain Lord Mansfield's prediction on the mitre over the chimney. Had they always been so properly bestowed, the dignity of the Church would have prevented the multitude of sectaries."

The king's visit to Hartlebury evidently afforded great satisfaction to the learned and excellent bishop. "Their Majesties," he writes, "after seeing the house, breakfasted in the library, and, when they had reposed themselves some time, walked into the garden and took several turns on the terraces, especially the Green Terrace in the chapel garden. Here they showed themselves to an immense crowd of people, who flocked in from the neighbourhood, and, standing on the rising grounds in the park, saw and were seen to great advantage. The day being extremely bright, the show was agreeable and striking." Colonel Digby, who was one of the royal party, told Miss Burney that, accustomed as he was to witness such scenes, yet the loyal joy and respect evinced by the vast crowd on this occasion affected him more sensibly than he could have imagined.

On the 5th of August the king visited Worcester for the purpose of attending a grand meeting of the choirs of Gloucester, Hereford, and Worcester, held for the benefit of the widows and orphans of the clergy of those dioceses. He remained at Worcester till the 9th, during which interval the court resided at the bishop's palace in that city. "The concourse of people of all ranks," writes the bishop, "was immense, and the joy universal; the weather was uncommonly fine." Miss Burney has recorded "the huzza that seemed to vibrate through the whole town, as the royal carriage drew

up at the bishop's palace." It cannot be doubted that the king was sensitively alive to the affectionate and enthusiastic welcome with which he was everywhere greeted by his people. More than once, in after years, he was heard to refer to his visit to Cheltenham, and to speak of the happy hours which he had passed in his Gloucestershire tour as more than making amends for the political solitudes of the past.

In so reflecting a mind as that of George the Third, the various scenes which he visited in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire must have given rise to many interesting considerations. He had traversed a district richly associated with memories of the alternate sovereignties of the Roman, the Dane, the Saxon, and the Norman. At Cirencester he had passed over immemorial roadways, once overlooked by the battlements, the prætorium, and the amphitheatre of the Roman. In the sylvan recesses of Oakley Grove he had stood on the spot where his predecessor, Alfred the Great, had signed his memorable treaty with Gothrum the Dane. In the cathedral at Gloucester he might have been reminded of the occasional fate of kings, as he lingered near the exquisite sepulchral monument of the murdered Edward the Second. At Worcester he had gazed on the not less noble effigy of King John, where the Norman monarch, by his own wish, sleeps near the holy Saxon father, St. Wolstan. In the Abbey Church

of Tewkesbury his eye must have wandered from the last resting-place of the slaughtered heir of the house of Lancaster, to that of the perjured prince who "stabbed him in the field by Tewkesbury." The rich and tranquil districts over which he journeyed had formerly trembled beneath the tread of steel-clad men, and been the scene of many a bloody struggle for a crown. Here the Red Rose had contended with the White, and there the Roundhead with the Cavalier. Everywhere reflections on the vanity of human wishes, and on the mutability of human affairs, must have presented themselves to the mind of the royal traveller. In passing Tewkesbury he had skirted the gory field which had witnessed the triumph of Edward of York, the flight of the ill-fated Margaret of Anjou, and the slaughter of her beloved son. At Worcester he had skirted the scene of the no less memorable triumph of Oliver Cromwell. Yet here, in this very city, — in the very streets through which Cromwell's Ironsides had dashed after the flying heir of the house of Stuart, — the constitutional king of a free people, unattended, even by a single constable, was to be seen quietly making his way through vast masses of loyal and cheering people, who respectfully opened an avenue for him as he passed. The fact is a remarkable one, that the king's only cicerone through the city of Worcester was a member of the house of Cromwell — thus presenting the curious incident of a

descendant of the great Protector pointing out to a sovereign of the house of Guelph the spot on which the gallant Duke of Hamilton fell in defence of the doctrine of the divine right of kings, and the grave, by the steps of the high altar in the cathedral, in which the noble cavalier sleeps his last !

Among other scenes of minor historical interest which the king visited during his progress, was Matson, the seat of George Selwyn, in the neighbourhood of Gloucester. "Mr. Selwyn," writes Horace Walpole to Lady Ossory, "I do not doubt is superlatively happy. I am curious to know what relics he has gleaned from the royal visit, that he can bottle up and place in his *sanctum sanctorum*." Matson, it may be mentioned, formed the headquarters of Charles the First during the siege of Gloucester, at which time his two eldest sons, afterward successively Charles the Second and James the Second, cut their names with their penknives in one of the apartments, traces of which were still visible at the time when George the Third visited Matson. On the 16th of August the court returned to Windsor, the king having been apparently restored to his usual good health. Before two months, however, had elapsed, it began to be rumoured that he had suffered a relapse. He had for some short time, as we learn from the pages of Miss Burney, been slightly indisposed, when on the 16th of October, after having walked for four

hours in the wet, he was imprudent enough to remain for a considerable time at St. James's Palace without changing his stockings. On the following day he was attacked by spasms in the stomach, and, though the complaint abated for a time, he was so ill on the night of the 19th as to cause great alarm to the royal household at Kew.

"The king," writes a well-informed contemporary, "came into the equerries' room, where he found Generals Budé and Goldsworthy; and, opening his waistcoat, he showed them two large spots on his breast. They both advised him to be careful not to catch cold, as the consequence would probably be a dangerous repelling of the eruption. The king, as usual, rejected this advice, with some degree of ill humour. He rode in the park; came home very wet; the spots disappeared; a slight fever first ensued, and soon after, the mental derangement."¹

It may be mentioned, as rather a remarkable fact, that the first person, not connected with the royal family, who seems to have entertained a suspicion that insanity was creeping over the king, was Mrs. Siddons. During a visit which she paid to Windsor Castle at this time, the king, without any apparent motive, placed in her hands a sheet of paper, blank, with the exception of his sig-

¹ MS. Diary of Col. Henry Norton Willis, comptroller of the household to the Princess Charlotte of Wales, and afterward chairman of the Board of Green Cloth.

nature, — an incident which struck her as so unaccountable, that she immediately carried it to the queen, who gratefully thanked her for her discretion. Yet it is not till the 22d that we find the painful truth forcing itself upon the convictions of Sir George Baker, who very properly communicated his fears to the ministry. In the meantime the king had named an early day for holding a levee — a ceremony, the fatigue and excitement of which he was obviously scarcely equal to undergo. So desirous, however, were the ministers to avoid creating any unnecessary alarm in the public mind, and moreover, so anxious was the king himself to keep his ailment a secret from his subjects, that it was determined he should appear at St. James's on the appointed day. He was resolved, as he wrote to Mr. Pitt, to make an effort, in order "to stop further lies, and any fall of the stocks." "I am certainly weak and stiff," he adds, "but no wonder. I am certain air and relaxation are the quickest restoratives." In a letter marked "most secret," Lord Grenville writes to Lord Buckingham that ministers were putting "as good a face" as they could upon the king's illness.

At the levee the king's altered manner and mode of talking could scarcely fail to elicit much uneasy observation. Mr. Pitt, in particular, is said to have been greatly struck by the painful change, as were also the Duke of Leeds, and the

Lord Chancellor Thurlow, both of whom, after the levee was over, were admitted to the royal closet. Some well-intended advice, addressed to him by the chancellor, — intimating how ill the king looked, and how advisable it was that he should return to Windsor and take care of himself, — elicited from him some excited expressions which could scarcely have failed to apprise the two lords of the true nature of his disorder. "You, too, then, my Lord Thurlow," he said, "forsake me, and suppose me ill beyond recovery; but, whatever you and Mr. Pitt may think and feel, I, that am born a gentleman, shall never lay my head on my last pillow in peace and quiet so long as I remember the loss of my American colonies."¹ One of the ailments of which the king complained, and on which his physicians subsequently laid stress in their evidence before Parliament, was, to use his own words, a "bodily stiffness." Yet, only very recently, during an interview with Mr. Pitt at Kew, he had stood, and had kept his minister standing, for no less a time than three hours and forty minutes. Lord Stanhope has pointed out, as a peculiarity of this reign, that as a general custom, probably assignable to German etiquette, the king, in his interviews with his ministers, neither asked them to sit down, nor sat down himself.

¹ "I had this fact," writes Lord Malmesbury, "from the Duke of Leeds, who was present."

Notwithstanding the fatigues and excitement of the levee, the king, on the following day, was well enough to remove with his family from Kew to Windsor. Still he was evidently very seriously ill, both in mind and body. Miss Burney, who was accidentally thrown into his company, describes him as having all the appearance of being in a high fever. His manner, indeed, was gracious almost to kindness; but, on the other hand, the hoarseness of his voice, the volubility of his language, and the vehemence of his gestures, startled her beyond measure. The next day, when on her way from the queen's apartment, she again encountered him, when, during a conversation about his health which lasted nearly half an hour, the agitation of his manner and the rapidity of his utterance were no less painful, although in other respects he was kind and gentle to a degree that made it affecting to listen to him. Ill as he was, all his care seemed to have been to conceal his sufferings from, and to allay the anxiety of others. Possibly, had he courted the perfect repose which was prescribed by his physicians, the progress of his disorder might have been arrested, but unfortunately they found him a refractory patient. For instance, on Wednesday, the 29th of October, we find him no fewer than five hours on horseback; on the 1st of November he went out hunting, and on the 3d he was again five hours on horseback. To Mr. Pitt, indeed, he writes on the 3d that "he

eats well, sleeps well, and is not in the least now fatigued with riding, though he cannot yet stand long, and is fatigued if he walks ;” yet, favourable as is this account of himself, he was, in fact, in a most alarming state. For instance, while conversing with the Duke of York after his return from one of his rides, he betrayed how completely his nerves were unbraced by bursting into tears. “He wished to God,” he exclaimed, “he might die, for he was going to be mad.” His voice by this time had grown painfully hoarse, in consequence of incessant talking, while so weak had he become in his limbs as to require support when he walked. “My dear Effy,” he said to an old favourite, Lady Effingham, “you see me all at once an old man.”¹ When Miss Burney again conversed with him, on the 2d, he told her he wanted more rest, yet, almost in the same breath, he added that he had slept the previous night like a child.

At the same time, nothing could exceed his kindness and gentleness. His chief anxiety seemed to centre in one amiable object, that of sparing the feelings of the queen by concealing from her, as much as possible, the extent and nature of his sufferings. “The queen is my physician,” he

¹ Elizabeth, daughter of Peter Beckford, Esq., and widow of Thomas Howard, second Earl of Effingham. Lady Effingham, who was a lady of the bedchamber to Queen Charlotte, died on the 12th of October, 1791.

said, alluding to her giving him his medicine, "and no man need have a better: she is my friend, and no man can have a better." Notwithstanding his bodily debility, he still insisted upon escorting her at night to the door of her dressing-room. With regard to the queen herself, her affliction was not the less poignant that she was forced to make every effort to conceal it from her husband and her attendants. Miss Burney more than once mentions having surprised her in tears. On the 3d she writes: "The queen is almost overpowered with some secret terror. I am affected beyond all expression in her presence, to see what struggles she makes to support serenity. To-day she gave up the conflict when I was alone with her, and burst into a violent fit of tears. It was very—very terrible to see."

On the following day the king seems to have been no worse, and on the morning of the next day was able to take a drive with the Princess Royal. "I looked from my window," writes Miss Burney, "to see him. He was all smiling benignity, but gave so many orders to the postilions, and got in and out of the carriage twice with such agitation, that again my fear of a great fever hanging over him grew more and more powerful." The account of the "airing" which the Princess Royal gave the queen was a cheering one, yet at this very time the king's fever was rapidly approaching its height. In the course of the evening it

began to be vaguely whispered among the tenants of the palace that some fearful catastrophe had occurred in the king's apartments. For some time, however, nothing more was known than that his Majesty was "in some strange way worse," and that the queen also had suddenly been taken ill. Even the princesses, amidst their tears, maintained the profoundest secrecy. Miss Burney has graphically described the awful stillness and gloom which pervaded the palace. For hours after dark she represents herself as seated in her solitary apartment, in silence, in ignorance, and dread. Twelve o'clock struck, and she opened her door to listen, but not even the distant noise of a servant crossing one of the passages, or ascending one of the staircases, met her ear. "Not a sound," she writes, "could I hear. My apartment seemed wholly separated from life and motion." At length a page came to summon her to the queen. The king, it seems, while seated at dinner, at which were present the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and the elder princesses, had been suddenly seized with delirium. The queen had been so terrified as to fall into violent hysterics, and the prince, little as he loved his father, had been so affected as to burst into tears.¹ Some years afterward, we find the prince describing the scene at Lord Jersey's table. "He told us," writes

¹ "The prince," writes Mr. Neville to Lord Buckingham, on the 7th, "seems frightened, and was blooded yesterday."

Colonel Willis, "he was present when the king was first seized with his mental disorder; that his Majesty caught him with both his hands by the collar, pushing him against the wall with some violence, and asked him who would dare say to the King of England that he should not speak out, or who should prevent his whispering. The king then whispered." That night, on Miss Burney entering the queen's apartment, she found her ghastly pale, but at the same time calm and collected. "How cold I am," she said, as she put her hand on one of Miss Burney's. "It felt like marble," writes the latter, "and it went to my heart's core." That night, probably for the first time since their marriage, the king and queen occupied separate apartments. It was, indeed, only on receiving an assurance that the queen was ill, and by stipulating that he should sleep in her dressing-room, which adjoined her bedchamber, that he could be prevailed upon to listen to reason. Painful, indeed, were the queen's feelings during the night. The king might at any moment become unmanageably violent, and, beyond the precaution of sentinelling the royal pages in the neighbouring passages and anterooms, no means of restraint were at hand.

By candle-light, at six o'clock in the following morning, Miss Burney wended her way through a thick November fog to the queen's apartment, where she found her royal mistress sitting up

in bed, wan and colourless as death. Only too audibly, issuing from the adjoining apartment, were overheard the hoarse voice and incessant loquacity of the afflicted monarch. So utterly desolate and miserable was the scene which Miss Burney witnessed, that she burst into a fit of tears, which, happily, proved infectious; the queen giving way to "a perfect agony of weeping." "I thank you, Miss Burney," she said; "you have made me cry. It is a great relief to me; I had not been able to cry before, all this night long." Miss Burney then learned that the night had been a most distressing one. The king, at a late hour, had taken it into his head that the queen had been removed from the palace; and, in order to satisfy himself on the subject, had insisted on entering her apartment, where he found her in bed with Miss Goldsworthy. "The queen," writes Lord Sheffield, on the 22d, "has not seen the king since the first days of his disorder, except once, which produced an affecting scene. He contrived to steal out of his room in search of her, supposing she and his children were stolen from him. She lay in a near room. He got to her bedside, drew the curtain, and exclaimed, 'She is there!' seemingly satisfied. It was half an hour before he could be prevailed upon to withdraw, during which interval the queen suffered indescribable terror."

In the course of the day, the lord chancellor,

at the express summons of the Prince of Wales, proceeded to Windsor Castle, where he received from the three physicians who were in attendance — Doctors Warren, Heberden, and Sir George Baker — a most distressing and alarming account of the king's condition. They were not only of opinion, they said, that his Majesty's life was in imminent danger, but that, in the event of his recovery, the loss of reason was greatly to be apprehended. "The alternative," writes William Grenville, "is one to which one cannot look without horror — that of a continuance of the present derangement of his faculties, without any other effect upon his health." Another, and not unimportant, person who arrived at the castle in the course of the day, was the once well-known comptroller of the prince's household, Captain Payne,¹ from whose pen we gather some fuller particulars as to the king's unhappy state. "The Duke of York, who is now looking over me," he writes to Sheridan, "and who is just come from the king's room, bids me add that his Majesty's situation is every moment becoming worse. His pulse is weaker and weaker, and the doctors say it is impossible to survive it long, if his situation does not

¹ Capt. John Willet Payne, R. N., comptroller of the household to the Prince of Wales, died a Rear-Admiral of the Red, on the 17th of November, 1803, at the age of fifty-one. He sat in Parliament as member for the borough of Huntingdon from May, 1787 to 1796.

take some extraordinary change in a few hours." "Since this letter was begun, all articulation even seems to be at an end with the poor king ; but for the two hours preceding, he was in a most determined frenzy." Late on one of those nights, when the Bishop of Lincoln called upon Pitt, he found him in momentary expectation of the arrival of a messenger from Windsor with the tidings of the king's death. "I am this instant returned from Windsor," writes Mr. Neville to Lord Buckingham, "and find from the best authority that the king's life is unfortunately despaired of. Warren, Heberden, Baker, and Reynolds are attending. I believe the fever has settled on the brain, as there is much delirium. The chancellor was at Windsor, and all the princes of the blood are sitting up in the next room to him. The queen has had fits, but is better to-day."

The night of the 6th was even more "affectingly dreadful" than the preceding one. The Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and the physicians and equerries, were reposing, some on sofas, and others seated on chairs, in an apartment close to the king's, when to their alarm and astonishment, he suddenly appeared amongst them. His amazement at finding himself in the midst of so unusual an assemblage was as great as theirs, and accordingly he eagerly inquired of them what they were doing there. The princes of the blood, owing to the stars which they wore on their

breasts, ought to have been conspicuous above the others, but, in consequence of the apartment being very dimly lighted, the king failed to recognise them. From some touching words, however, which escaped him, it was manifest that one of them at least was uppermost in his heart. Frederick, he said, was his favourite—his friend. "Yes," he said, "Frederick is my friend." In the meantime, no one present dared approach or remonstrate with the sick monarch. Even Sir George Baker, though it was his duty, as those who were near him whispered him, to lead back the king to his bedchamber, declined making the attempt. As it proved, however, he gained but little by his timidity. The king, having recognised him, suddenly laid hold of him and fastened him against the wall, telling him that he had mistaken his complaint, which was only nervousness, and that he was nothing more nor less than an old woman. Colonel Digby,¹ the queen's chamberlain, now considered it his duty to interfere, and accordingly, telling the king in a tone of respectful authority that he must go to bed, he took him by the arm and endeavoured to lead him toward his

¹ The Hon. Stephen Digby — the charming and accomplished "Mr. Fairly" of Madame D'Arblay's "Diaries" — was son of William, fifth Baron Digby. On the 2d of June, 1774, he was promoted to be a colonel in the army, and in 1788 was appointed by Queen Charlotte master of St. Katherine's Hospital, the only preferment, we believe, in the gift of the Queen Consort or Queen Dowager of England.

apartment. "I will not go," cried the king; "who are you?" "I am Colonel Digby, Sir," he answered; "your Majesty has been very good to me often, and now I am going to be very good to you; for you must come to bed. It is necessary to your life." So entirely was the king taken by surprise, that, as the Prince of Wales told the queen the next day, he allowed himself to be led to his bedchamber as passively as if he had been a child.

Of the first stages of the king's illness, some further interesting particulars were afterward related by the Prince of Wales to Colonel Willis at Carlton House. "On his Majesty's first attack," said the prince, "he complained of a heaviness in his head, which was relieved by bleeding." In this short-lived interval he locked up all his papers, jewels, etc., except his watch and the queen's picture, which he kept by his bedside. He told Ernst that it was probable that he should never again rise from his bed, and desired that Mr. Best should be sent for to make a new will. By a former will, said the prince, he had left his personal property to him, as he had told him in the presence of the queen and most of his brothers and sisters; but it was believed that this new one was to be wholly in favour of the queen. Mr. Best, however, did not arrive till his Majesty's intellects were totally deranged. One of the king's amusements, in this sad state, was looking over a Court Calendar, and

marking persons' names whom he meant to dismiss from their offices. On his demanding a new calendar for the year, Ernst had the address to obtain the old one from him, and threw it into the fire.

CHAPTER VII.

Excitement in London Occasioned by the King's Illness — The King's Great Popularity — Joy of the Opposition — Proceedings of the Prince of Wales — "Jack Payne" and the Duchess of Gordon — Cruel Treatment of the Queen — Garrulity a Feature of the King's Disorder — Fluctuation in His Malady — Distressing Condition of the Queen — Disinterested Conduct of Mr. Pitt — Sudden Return of Mr. Fox from Italy — Annoyances Awaiting Him — Sheridan's Supremacy with the Prince — Negotiations with Thurlow — Wedderburn's Disappointment — Thurlow Betrays Pitt's Regency Plan to the Prince — His Interviews with the Prince and the Chiefs of the Opposition — Details of the "Plan of Regency" — The Queen's Fears — Wedderburn's Unconstitutional Advice to the Prince.

IN the meantime, the imminent danger to which the king's life was exposed, as well as the dreadful and mysterious nature of his malady, had gradually become known to the public. Grief and consternation prevailed in almost all quarters. When Sir Nathaniel Wraxall returned to London at this time, he found the capital a scene of such excitement as he had never previously witnessed, and which, till the arrival, four years afterward, of the news of the decapitation of Louis the Sixteenth, it was not his fortune to see surpassed. To Lord Bulkeley Lord Buckingham writes, on the

11th of November, that the stocks have already fallen two per cent.; adding that the alarms of the people of London are very little flattering to the prince. "You may easily believe," writes Lord Sydney, on the 13th, "that the hurry and ferment are great at present. People in general, of all ranks, seem to be truly sensible of the calamitous effects to be dreaded from an unfavourable termination of his Majesty's disorder." The fact is a remarkable one, as affording evidence of the king's universal popularity, that his restoration to health was prayed for in the meeting-houses of the Dissenters and in the synagogues of the Jews, before the Privy Council had approved of the form of prayer which was to be offered up for him in the churches and chapels of the Church of England. So universally, too, flowed public sympathy in favour of the afflicted monarch, that the king's physicians began to receive anonymous letters, threatening them with condign punishment in the event of his illness proving fatal. Sir George Baker was stopped in his carriage by the populace, and menaced with personal violence. So high, indeed, ran the tide of loyalty and affection, that Sir Lucas Pepys, who by this time had been added to the number of royal physicians, told Miss Burney that, in the event of the king dying, he believed that none of their lives would be safe.

At Brooks's Club alone, while elsewhere all was pity and consternation, undisguised satisfaction

prevailed. The opposition, whose prospects had recently appeared so hopeless, were now sanguine that their hour of triumph was at hand. Whether the excellent king died, or whether he sank into a confirmed lunatic, was apparently of little interest to the fashionable scions of the great Whig families, so long as the prince, whether as regent or king, should be invested with the dispensation of regal powers and of regal patronage. "You may naturally," writes William Grenville, "conceive the exultation, not wearing even the appearance of disguise, which there is in one party, and the depression of those who belong to the other." And again he writes: "In the midst of all this confusion, and while his sons and brothers are struggling to gain entire possession of his authority, the king may recover his reason! What a scene will present itself to him! And how devoutly he must pray, if he is wise, to lose again all power of recollection or reflection!"

In the meantime, the Prince of Wales, in hourly expectation of being called to the throne, had taken the government of the palace out of the hands of his afflicted mother. "The prince," writes Lord Bulkeley, "has taken the command at Windsor, in consequence of which there is no command whatsoever." "Nothing," writes Miss Burney, "was done but by his orders, and he was applied to in every difficulty. The queen interfered not in anything. She lived entirely in her two new rooms,

and spent the whole day in patient sorrow and retirement with her daughters." One of the first acts of authority on the part of the prince was to issue regulations for the exclusion of strangers and others from the palace. One of those, by whom the prince's orders were felt the most cruelly, was his former sub-governor, the excellent and accomplished Leonard Smelt, a gentleman held in high esteem by George the Third and his consort, to both of whom he was affectionately attached.¹ He had travelled post from York on hearing of the king's illness, and had just sent to announce his arrival at Windsor to the queen, when he accidentally met the Prince of Wales, who received him with great kindness of manner, and completely approved of the steps which he had taken. Great then was his surprise when, on returning at a later hour to the Queen's Lodge, the porter handed him his greatcoat, telling him he had the prince's instructions to refuse him admission. His indignation was naturally excessive. He would "come no more," he haughtily told Miss Burney; and she adds, "after such an unmerited, wanton affront, who could ask him?"²

¹ Even Walpole, chary as he usually is of praise, has gone out of his way to do justice to the "singular virtues and character," and "ignorance of the world as well as of its depravity," of this estimable person. "Happy for the prince," adds Walpole, "had he had no other governor; at least no other director of his morals and opinions of government."

² It is but fair to add, that some time afterward the prince apologised to his old sub-governor on meeting him at Kew.

Another proceeding of the prince, in the exercise of his new functions, was the taking possession of his father's papers, an act which gave much offence to the queen at the time, and which, after the king's recovery, the prince was obliged to explain to him in an apologetic letter, which is still extant.¹ As the prince, however, if his explanation be correct, not only consulted the lord chancellor on the subject, but placed his father's effects in the hands of the proper officers of the Crown, the anger of his parents may have been occasioned rather by the general heartlessness which marked his conduct at this time, than by the single act in question which, after all, may have been well-intentioned. Certainly his behaviour during the period of his father's prostration was marked at times by the most lamentable want of taste and proper feeling. For instance, a lady, who was evidently well informed of what was passing in the higher circles of society, relates the following particulars in a letter to a friend, on the authority of Lady Mount Edgumbe, who herself received them from the Duchess of Gordon: "A few days ago Mrs.

¹ The king's private effects would seem to have been of considerable value. Horace Walpole, in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, dated the 12th of February following, speaks of the discovery of the king's "vast private hoard," and the prince's letter to his father tends to the same inference. "The situation," he writes, "of the apartments of Windsor, appeared to me by no means secure, and the suspicion which might get abroad of their value seemed to increase the risk."

Richard Walpole gave a supper to the two princes, Mrs. Fitzherbert, Colonel Fullarton, Jack Payne, — who is such a favourite he is to be a lord of the admiralty, and leans on the prince, as he walks, not the prince on him, — Miss Vanneck,¹ and a few others. The Duchess of Gordon the only Pittite. The prince says, ‘What a fine fellow my brother York is! He never forsakes me. The other day, when we went to look for the king’s money, jewels, etc., at Kew, as we opened the drawers my mother looked very uneasy and grew angry. Says York to her, “Madam, I believe you are as much deranged as the king.”’ Then says Jack Payne, after a great many invectives against Mr. Pitt, calling him William the Fourth, William the Conqueror, etc., ‘Mr. Pitt’s chastity will protect the queen,’ which was received by all present as a very good thing.² The Duchess of Gordon, for which you will like her, though a Scotchwoman, declared if they began to abuse the queen she would leave the room. And now I am in a fright lest I should

¹ Miss Vanneck was a sister of the hostess, Mrs. Richard Walpole. They were daughters of Sir Joshua Vanneck, merchant, of Haveningham Hall, Suffolk.

² Alluding, of course, to the well-known jokes against Mr. Pitt, which were current at this period:

“Sooner Dundas an Indian bride decline;
Sooner shall I my chastity resign.”

There are in the “Political Miscellanies” no fewer than eleven irreverent epigrams on the “Immaculate Continence of the British Scipio.”

have told you all this before.”¹ On another occasion of “Jack Payne” venting some ribaldry against the queen, the duchess gave him a lesson which he probably never forgot. “You little, insignificant, good-for-nothing upstart — you chattering puppy!” she exclaimed, “how dare you name your royal master’s royal mother in that style!”²

“Filial ingratitude!

Is’t not as this mouth should tear this hand
From lifting food to it?

.
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all! —
O that way madness lies! Let me shun that;
No more of that!”

— *King Lear*, Act iii. Sc. 4.

The fact of the prince overhauling his father’s papers was unhappily not the only occasion of his unduly intruding himself on the apartments of the sick monarch. “Think,” writes Lord Grenville, “of the Prince of Wales introducing Lord Lothian³ into the king’s room when it was dark-

¹ Miss Sayer to Miss Huber. This letter was sent to Lord Auckland, then the British minister at Madrid, to give him “the best information.”

² Notwithstanding the duchess’s intimacy with the Prince of Wales and his friends, she continued to live on the most friendly terms with Mr. Pitt. She one day invited him to dinner, at what was then thought the most unreasonable hour of eight. The prime minister wrote back to her, that he was engaged to sup at that hour with the Bishop of Lincoln.

³ William John, fifth Marquis of Lothian, afterward a general in the army, died 4th of January, 1815.

ened, in order that he might hear his ravings at the time that they were at the worst !”

“ *Prince Henry.* I never thought to hear you speak again.

King Henry. Thy wish was father, Harry, to that thought,

I stay too long by thee, I weary thee.

Dost thou so hunger for my empty chair,

That thou wilt needs invest thee with mine honours

Before thy hour be ripe ?”

— *King Henry IV., Part II. Act iv. Sc. 4.*

So little respect appears to have been shown for the illustrious invalid by his expectant heir, that it was not till five days after he had been seized with delirium — and then only at the instance of Mr. Pitt and Lord Sydney — that two grooms of the bedchamber were appointed to receive the names of the numerous persons who flocked to the palace, to make anxious inquiries after their sovereign.

In the early stages of the king's malady, order and decency had prevailed at Windsor Castle. Ministers, on their part, were desirous of concealing the true nature of the king's indisposition ; while the queen naturally manifested the greatest repugnance to the secrets of her consort's sick-chamber becoming the topics of public gossip. So successfully, for a time, had secrecy been preserved, that even Miss Burney, notwithstanding the confidential post which she held under the

royal roof, appears for some days to have been under the conviction that the king's disorder was of no worse a character than a violent fever. With the arrival, however, of the Prince of Wales and his friend, Captain Payne, the aspect of affairs at Windsor became entirely altered. There are extant, for instance, letters addressed by the latter from Windsor Castle to his friend and boon companion, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, in which the details of the king's disorder — his "gestures and ravings," his "new noise in imitation of the howling of a dog," his imagining himself to be in a state of religious inspiration, and an attempt which he made, in his delirium, to fling himself from a window — are related with painful minuteness. What was much worse, in the circle of fashionable people in which Captain Payne and his royal master moved, the king's terrible disorder was treated as a subject, not for pity and regret, but for ribald merriment. In the card-room at Brooks's, instead of the members saying, "I play the king," it became the cant custom to call out, "I play the lunatic."

From the suffering monarch, let us turn for awhile to his almost equally afflicted consort. From the time when the queen had ceased to find herself mistress in her husband's palace, — from the hour, in fact, when she was no longer the first person to be consulted as to his wants, and no longer the first to be acquainted with any change in his

terrible condition, — a painful sense of humiliation was added to her other sorrows. The first occasion on which she was made to feel her altered position was under circumstances peculiarly cruel. On the day that Doctor Warren had been called in, she had waited in trembling anxiety for the moment of his quitting the king's presence, never doubting that he would pay her the compliment of immediately hastening to her apartment, to communicate to her the opinion which he had formed of the state of his illustrious patient. "The poor queen," writes Miss Burney, "in a torrent of tears, prepared herself for seeing him." So long a time, however, was he in making his appearance, that at length the queen despatched Lady Elizabeth Waldegrave to ascertain the cause of the delay. The intelligence which Lady Elizabeth brought back sank deep into the proud heart of the sorrowing queen. Doctor Warren, it seems, without having condescended to make the slightest communication, personally or by message, to his royal mistress, had proceeded, with the other physicians, from the lodge to the castle, in order to report progress to the profligate young prince, whose star, to all appearance, was rising so rapidly in the ascendant. "I think," writes Miss Burney, "a deeper blow I have never witnessed. The tears were now wiped ; indignation arose, with pain, the severest pain, of every species." Unfortunately, the queen's affliction was augmented, in the

course of the day, by her being constrained, at the instance of the royal physicians, to remove to other apartments at a distance from those of her beloved consort. "At the entrance into this new habitation," continues Miss Burney, "the poor wretched queen once more gave way to a perfect agony of grief and affliction; while the words, 'What will become of me? What will become of me?' uttered with the most piercing lamentation, struck deep and hard into all our hearts." But even the sad luxury of being allowed to weep, either alone or in the presence of her daughters, was denied to the unhappy queen. From the joint and trustworthy accounts of Miss Burney and Lord Bulkeley, we glean that the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York were not only in the constant habit of "going in and out" of their mother's apartment, hurrying "to and fro everywhere," but that the abrupt, if not indelicate manner, in which they had accustomed themselves to speak of any change in their father's condition, was calculated to produce a most distressing effect upon the nervous system of the agitated queen.

The king in the meantime continued in the most afflicted state. When, on the evening of the 8th of November, Mr. Pitt, after an interview with the royal physicians, returned from Windsor to London, he brought back the disheartening intelligence, that, though the king's life was thought to be in no immediate danger,

his mental derangement threatened to be permanent. According to Lord Bulkeley, — who paid a three days' visit to Windsor at this time, — the king's state was "worse than a thousand deaths." On the 10th, Miss Burney also writes : " This was a most dismal day. The dear and most suffering king was extremely ill. The queen very wretched." On the 11th the king was somewhat better. His pulse and appetite were not only as good as before his attack, but, in his lucid intervals, he conversed with great composure with the page in attendance on him, especially recurring to a projected visit to the south of France of his sixth son, Augustus, afterward Duke of Sussex.

One of the most remarkable features of the king's disorder was his never-ceasing garrulity. Upon one occasion he is said to have talked unceasingly for sixteen hours.¹ As Sir Lucas Pepys and Colonel Digby severally told Miss Burney, he talked of "everybody and everything."

¹ The following brief extracts from the diary of Lord Chief Justice Kenyon are not without interest : " *Nov. 7th.* Dined with the lord chancellor, who was just come from the Prince of Wales, who had sent for him to Windsor, on account of the king's alarming state of mind. Had much conversation with the chancellor as to what was to be done if the illness continued ; regency, etc." " *Nov. 9th.* The chancellor sent for me again this day, to consult about the public affairs, he having just had a letter from Doctor Warren, *Delirium sine febre.*" " *Nov. 10th.* Breakfasted with lord chancellor, who had been yesterday at Windsor by the prince's desire, and had much conversation with the prince."

Yet, even in his delirium, he maintained a singular control over his ideas, and a watchfulness over his speech, which enabled him to avoid certain delicate subjects on which his mind might have been expected to dwell, and which it was most desirable that he should have self-command enough to avoid. It was observed, moreover, by those who attended him in his illness, that though, in his wanderings, he frequently related personal anecdotes of the dead, he carefully avoided discussing the characters of the living. But the most striking features of his painful malady were the never-failing evidences of purity of mind, and goodness of heart, which gleamed through the mist which obscured his intellects. It was observed by Colonel Digby, who was constantly for hours with him in his sick-chamber, that "the highest panegyric that could be formed of his character would not equal what in those moments showed itself; that, with his heart and mind entirely open, not one wrong idea appeared; that all was benevolence, charity, rectitude, love of his country, and anxiety for its welfare."

We have the further authority of Colonel Digby, as well as that of Doctor Baillie, that the king, during his illness, "said many acute and reasonable things;" that he showed no sign of failure of intellect, but, on the contrary, that he frequently reflected and reasoned correctly. As instances in

point, the following anecdotes used to be related by the master of the rolls, Sir William Grant. The conversation happening one day to turn upon the county of Dorset, the king made some inquiries, by name, respecting several families resident in that county, including the family of the deputy judge-advocate. "When I go to Hanover," he said, "Mr. — must go with me." Having been asked the reason why, "Because," he replied, "deputy judge-advocate must be with me, to correspond with the judge-advocate, who cannot leave England, and he must have a direct official correspondence with me." This was a fact, it seems, of which no other person present was cognisant but the king.¹

The other instance related by Sir William is as follows. Among the news of the day, a report of the death of the Marchioness of Buckingham happened to be mentioned in the king's hearing. "I am sorry for it," said the king, "for she was a good woman, though a Roman Catholic." For the mar-

¹ "He spoke," writes Rose, "of them [the duties of the office] as important; said that a deputy should be appointed; that the situation of the principal should be very respectably filled; alluded to the case of the court martial sitting on some officers of the Bedfordshire militia, where the court, from the ignorance of their judge-advocate, had got into a most awkward scrape. He then mentioned the candidates for the employment: Mr. Reeves, the law clerk of the Privy Council, supported by the chancellor, but unfit for the situation from his impracticability, his temper, and his idleness; Mr. Lewis, late under-secretary at war, supported by a set about the Duke of York, his only recom-

quis he expressed much sympathy ; observing that if marriage vows were to be dissolved, and Lady Buckingham were still alive, he believed her lord would renew his. " By the bye," he added, archly, " I do not think many of my friends would do so."

From the 12th to the 15th of November the king continued to show some signs of amendment, but on the 16th all was gloom and despair again at Windsor. " The king," writes Miss Burney, " was worse. His night had been very bad ; he had now some symptoms even dangerous to his life. Oh, good Heaven, what a day did this prove ! I saw not a human face, save at dinner ; and then what faces ! Gloom and despair in all, and silence to every species of intelligence !" Similarly distressing was the night of the 19th. " Sir Charles Hawkins came," proceeds Miss Burney. " He had sat up. Oh, how terrible a narrative did he drily give of the night ! Short, abrupt, peremptorily bad, and indubitably hopeless. I did not dare alter, but I greatly softened, this relation, in giving it to

mendation being his having the honour to be brother-in-law to General Brownrigge, not educated to the profession of the law ; and Mr. Watson, a person altogether unknown, and so little esteemed in the volunteer corps to which he belongs, that the officers of it would not allow him to succeed to the majority on a vacancy. His Majesty then returned to the importance of the office, and added that he felt, personally, a strong anxiety that it should be well and respectably filled, as, in truth, he frequently decided matters of a very nice and delicate nature on the opinion of the judge-advocate, in discussions with him ; putting, therefore, his conscience, to a certain extent, into his hands."

my poor queen." This day Doctor Warren told Mr. Pitt that there was now every reason to believe that the king's disorder was no other than direct lunacy. It was the vehement demand of the afflicted monarch, at this time, to be allowed to see his daughters; but this was a request which his physicians deemed it their imperative duty to refuse.

From the 20th to the 28th no important change seems to have taken place in the condition of the royal invalid. "The king," said Colonel Digby, on the 23d, "was very ill indeed, and so little aware of his own condition, that he would submit to no rule, and chose to have company with him from morning till night, sending out for the gentlemen one after another, without intermission." It was now thought necessary, for the sake of the king's health, to forbid his equerries attending upon him in his sick-chamber.

Sad, however, as was the condition of George the Third, that of his queen continued to be scarcely less distressing. More than three centuries had elapsed since, in the lordly chambers of Windsor, a Queen of England had prayed that sanity might be restored to an insane consort. There, in the old time, the desolate but high-spirited Margaret of Anjou had watched, with her infant boy in her lap, by the couch of the "meek usurper," Henry the Sixth; resorting to every means which she could devise, — from the orisons of the devout, to the love-song of the minstrel, — to

recover her husband from the terrible lethargy into which he had sunk. But sad as had been the condition of Margaret of Anjou, still more distressing was that of Charlotte of Mecklenburg. Margaret, at all events, had been at the head of a powerful party in the state, but the consort of George the Third was, personally, without a single powerful friend in the kingdom. Her sons, who should have been a protection and a comfort to her, were numbered among their father's enemies. No provision, it would seem, had been made for her younger children. The lord chancellor, who should have been her adviser, was making terms with her adversaries.

Happily, the king and the royal family had a staunch and powerful champion in Mr. Pitt, who, whatever might be the consequences to himself, was resolved to guard the interests of his royal master in such a manner that, in the event of his recovering his reason, he should find his affairs as little as possible disarranged, and his kingly authority,¹ at least, unimpaired. These objects could be

¹ "The great object to be looked to," writes William Grenville to his brother, the Marquis of Buckingham, on the 9th of November, "seems to be the keeping the government in such a state as that, if the king's health should be restored, he might be as far as possible enabled to resume it, and to conduct it in such a manner as he might judge best. I suppose there never was a situation in which any set of men ever had, at once, so many points to decide, so essentially affecting their own honour, character, and future situation, their duty to their country in a most critical situation, and their duty to their unhappy master, to

attained only by restricting the powers of the Prince of Wales, in the event of his becoming regent, and accordingly, although Pitt had everything to gain by courting the favour of the heir to the throne, and everything to lose by incurring his displeasure, — although in the event of his dismissal from office he had apparently no brighter prospect before him than that of returning to his barrister's chambers and his law books, — we shall find him defending the cause of the prostrated king with all the disinterestedness and self-devotion with which, under similar circumstances, Sully would have stood by Henry the Fourth of France, or William Bentinck by William the Third of England. True it is that the merchants and bankers of the city of London, aware of his straitened private means, and grateful to him for the services which he had rendered to commerce, had desired to make him independent of the freaks of fortune by presenting him with the splendid gift of £100,000, but the offer had been unhesitatingly refused. "No consideration upon earth," he told his friend, George Rose, "should induce him to accept it." "Does not Pitt," writes Hannah More to her sister, "fight like a hero for the poor queen? But who will fight

whom they are unquestionably bound by ties of gratitude and honour, independent of considerations of public duty toward him. I hope God, who has been pleased to afflict us with this severe and heavy trial, will enable us to go through it honestly, conscientiously, and in a manner not dishonourable to our characters."

for him, for he has not a hundred a year in the world? Like an honest old house steward, going to be turned off, he is anxious to put everything in order, and leave the house in such condition that the next servants may do as little mischief as possible." "In the midst of all these disquieting circumstances," writes Wilberforce, "my friend is every day matter of fresh and growing admiration. I wish you were as constantly, as I am, witness to that simple and earnest regard for the public welfare by which he is so uniformly actuated. Great as I know is your attachment to him, you would love him more and more."

In the meantime, the probability of Pitt proposing in Parliament to impose a restricted regency on the heir to the throne, had occurred to and alarmed the minds of the prince and his friends. Unluckily for the opposition, the prince's chief adviser, Charles Fox, was absent at this time, on his way to Italy. The Duke of Dorset¹ mentions his departure from Paris with Mrs. Armstead on the 15th of August. During the following month we find him at Lausanne. Here he spent a day with Gibbon, the historian, which the latter has recorded as one of the pleasantest he ever passed. Emancipated from the frivolities of Brooks's and the tumult of politics, he avoided the latter subject as much as possible; spoke of Pitt "as one great man should speak of another;" discoursed

¹ At this time the British ambassador at Paris.

enthusiastically about books, from the *Iliad* to the "Arabian Nights;" and, as he wandered with Gibbon among his favourite flower-beds, displayed as much knowledge of botany and gardening as the historian himself possessed. From Lausanne, Fox continued his journey to Berne and Zurich, intending to extend it as far as Rome. He had proceeded, however, no farther than Bologna, and had scarcely been afforded time to saunter amongst "its stately marble tombs and colonnades," when he was overtaken by a courier, who brought him letters which decided him upon proceeding homeward. At the top of Mont Cenis, he met the great heiress, Miss Pulteney, to whom, four months previously, it had been currently believed that he was about to be married,¹ and to whom he was able to communicate the important intelligence of the king's illness. On the 24th of November he reached his lodgings in St. James's

¹ "The marriage of Fox with Miss Pulteney," writes Sir William Young, on the 7th of June, "is something more than common talk. At the Duke of York's ball, he sat three hours in a corner with her; attends her weekly to Ranelagh; and is a perfect Philander." Again, Storer writes to Lord Auckland, on the 6th: "What do you think of Mr. Fox going to be married—and to Miss Pulteney? There certainly is so much probability, or at least he fancies so, that he gives himself in spectacle at Ranelagh; hands her about, etc." "Charles will say to Pitt, like Lothario to Altamont [in the 'Fair Penitent'], 'In love I triumphed.'" Miss Pulteney, afterward successively created Baroness and Countess of Bath, married General Sir James Murray, Bart., and died, without leaving issue, in 1808.

Street, having performed a journey of eight hundred miles in nine days, which at the time was thought an extraordinary feat. In the meantime, the opposition, according to Lord Bulkeley, had been looking out for him "as the Jews look out for their Messiah." Parliament, he found, had assembled on the 20th; but in consequence of the state of the king's health, had been adjourned till the 4th of December.¹

Fox, on his return to England, was not only suffering from ill health, but had the mortification to find himself beset with difficulties of all kinds. Dissensions and divisions had sprung up amongst his political friends. To his great annoyance, Sheridan had not only grown into such high favour with the heir to the throne as to be popularly styled his "prime minister," but, on the plea of bailiffs having taken possession of his house, was about to become the guest of Mrs. Fitzherbert,

¹ During the short time that Fox was at Berne, he happened to fall in with the celebrated Lavater, from whose note-book Sir Ralph Payne was afterward allowed to extract the following curious memoranda :

"*Front* — Inépuisable; plus de richesse d'idées et d'images que je n'ai jamais vu sur aucune physionomie au monde.

"*Sourcils* — Superbes, regnants, dominants.

"*Nex* — Médiocre.

"*Les Yeux* — Remplis de génie, perçans, fascinants, magiques.

"*Les Joues* — Sensuels.

"*Bouche* — Pleine d'une volubilité surprenante et agréable; et le bas du visage doux, affable, sociable."

thus securing for himself frequent and private unrestricted intercourse with the prince. "Sheridan," writes the Archbishop of Canterbury, "is, on all hands, understood to be the prime favourite, and is so sensible of it as modestly to pretend to a Cabinet place." By his "silly vanity," according to William Grenville, and by his "eagerness to display his personal importance," he had given such offence to his party during Fox's absence, that the Duke of Portland had declared his determination not to sit in the same Cabinet with him. Another source of great annoyance to Fox was an intention expressed by Rolle, member for Devonshire, to demand further explanation from him in the House of Commons on the delicate subject of the Prince of Wales's marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert. "Fox," writes a contemporary, "besides ill health, is plagued to death all day long ; dissatisfied with Mr. Sheridan's supremacy, and not choosing to be questioned by Mr. Rolle, who vows he will, in spite of threats and opposition, *approfondir* that matter." ¹

¹ On the 13th of December Sir William Young writes to the Marquis of Buckingham: "Rolle and Sheridan had a whispering conference under the gallery for some minutes; the result of which, Sir J. Scott, solicitor-general, with whom I dined, said he understood to be firmness on the part of Rolle in his intention at a proper time to come forward." William Grenville also subsequently writes to the marquis: "Fox is gone to Bath. Whether he is very ill, as some say, or wants to shirk the discussion about Mrs. Fitzherbert, as others assert, I know not."

But the circumstance which, most of all, offended Fox, was the fact of Sheridan and Payne having persuaded the prince to allow them to enter into a secret negotiation with Thurlow, by the articles of which the surly and intriguing chancellor was, on condition of his forsaking the cause of the king for that of the prince, to be permitted, in the event of the Whigs turning out the present government, to retain his seat on the woolsack. Fox not only personally and heartily disliked Thurlow, but, unfortunately, the Great Seal had been almost promised to Wedderburn by the Whigs, and accordingly, important as it was to secure the powerful alliance of Thurlow, Fox could not but feel that his own good faith, and that of his party, were compromised by the agreement which had been entered into during his absence. The negotiation, however, had been carried too far to admit of its being broken off, and consequently Fox had no other choice but to put the best face on the matter that he could, and to devise the safest means of conducting a secret correspondence with his new ally. "You know," we find him writing to Mr. Adam, "I have a kind of horror of negotiations with Thurlow, whatever favourable appearances they have." To Sheridan he also writes: "I have swallowed a pill, — a most bitter one it was, — and have written to Lord Loughborough, whose answer, of course, must be consent. What is to be done next?"

Should the prince himself, you or I, or Warren, be the person to speak to the chancellor?" And he adds, "I do not remember ever feeling so uneasy about any political thing I ever did in my life." That Fox wrote from his heart is evinced by a letter addressed by him at the time to Lord Loughborough, which is still preserved among the Rosslyn MSS. "If you can call here," he writes, from his lodgings in St. James's Street, "it would be best; but if you cannot, pray let me have a line, though I know your answer, and the more certain I am of it, the more I feel ashamed. I really feel myself unhinged to a great degree, and till I see you, which I hope will be soon, or hear from you, shall feel very unpleasantly." Fortunately, Wedderburn, though suffering bitter disappointment, succumbed to the wishes of his party with a much better grace than might have been anticipated.

The fact that Pitt's plan of regency was no sooner decided upon than it was betrayed to the heir apparent and to his advisers, appears to be as certain as that the traitor in the ministerial camp was the lord chancellor. With the exception of Thurlow, the prime minister had confided his intentions to no single person but the groom of the stole, Lord Weymouth, on whose reticence and fidelity not a breath of suspicion appears to have rested. William Grenville, alluding to the chancellor, writes to Lord Buckingham: "You will be

at no loss to guess where the prince acquires his knowledge of the plans of regency which are to be proposed." Whatever suspicions Pitt may personally have entertained on the subject, they could scarcely have failed to be strengthened by the following accidental occurrence. He was in bed at his official residence in Downing Street, when, at half-past one o'clock in the morning of the 27th of November, he was awoken by a summons from the chancellor to attend a Cabinet council, which, by order of the prince, was to be held on that day at Windsor. As the letter ought properly to have been delivered at half-past nine on the preceding evening, some inquiries were put to the messenger as to the causes of so culpable a delay, and among other questions he was asked whether the chancellor was still up. "Yes," he innocently replied, "and Mr. Fox was with him." The inference to be deduced from so significant a fact, it was of course impossible to mistake.

Another incident of a similar condemnatory character, as regards the chancellor's treason, is reported to have occurred at the close of one of the Cabinet councils which, at this period, it was found requisite to hold at Windsor. At the close of the discussions, the respective ministers, with the exception of Thurlow, had been presented with their hats, but that of the chancellor was nowhere to be discovered. In the midst of the awkwardness and delay consequent on this trifling

circumstance, one of the royal pages came running up to the confused chancellor with the lost hat in his hand. "My lord," he said, in the hearing of the other ministers, "I found it in the closet of his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales." In all probability this was far from having been the only occasion on which the prince and Thurlow had found opportunities of arranging their plans. For instance, after the breaking up of the council which had been held at Windsor on the 27th, while the other ministers were on their way to dine and sleep, according to agreement, at Salt Hill, we find the chancellor making his escape to the prince's apartments, where refreshments were brought to him and where the prince, who had himself dined, sat by him during his meal. Such suspicious proceedings could scarcely fail to alarm the chancellor's colleagues, and accordingly, at another meeting of the Cabinet, which took place in Downing Street on the 29th, several home questions were put to him, evidently for the purpose of testing his good faith. By one it was asked if any one knew whether Mr. Fox had yet seen the Prince of Wales, or had held any communication with him? By another, what were Mr. Fox's proceedings? The wily lawyer, however, was not to be disconcerted. He not only expressed the most perfect ignorance on these subjects, but had the effrontery to inquire in return whether any one present knew the colour

of Fox's carriage, or whether any one had seen it on the road to Windsor? Yet, as William Grenville writes on the following day, "It is unquestionably true that he has seen Fox, and I believe he has also seen Sheridan repeatedly, and certainly the Prince of Wales, and of all these conversations he has never yet communicated one word to any other member of the Cabinet." That the public were not altogether unsuspicious in regard to the nature of the chancellor's proceedings, is shown by one of the caricatures of the day, which represents him taking off his coat and turning it inside out, exclaiming, as he does so, "One side will do as well as another."

Parliament reassembled on the 4th of December, when Mr. Pitt, in the House of Commons, and Lord Camden, in the House of Lords, severally laid upon the tables of the two Houses the evidence of the royal physicians, who, on the preceding day, had been examined before the Privy Council as to the state of the king's health. Generally speaking, their opinions were in favour of ultimate recovery, although, on the other hand, they contemplated so long a period intervening, as to leave Pitt no other option but to bring his "plan of regency" before Parliament. As regarded the king, personally, it was Pitt's recommendation that the care and management of the royal person, as well as the appointments in the royal household, should be vested in the queen.

At the same time, he proposed to confer on the Prince of Wales the office of regent, with the full power of selecting his own ministers, but withholding from him, during the king's illness, the privilege of granting peerages except to such of his Majesty's issue as might attain the age of twenty-one, and shackling him with some severe restrictions in regard to alienating the king's property, whether civil or personal, or granting pensions or places in reversion. These limitations, as Mr. Pitt afterward explained in Parliament, were framed on the contingency of his Majesty's recovery. Should that event unhappily not ensue, it would then, he said, be for Parliament, in its wisdom, to decide on the claims of the heir apparent to be invested with unrestricted kingly powers.

To the queen the minister's proposition to invest her with the management of the royal person and household must have afforded unqualified satisfaction. Distressing as she well knew that it must prove to the king, in the event of his recovery, to find his favourite ministers displaced for statesmen who were personally obnoxious to him, yet still more bitter were likely to be his feelings at missing the familiar faces of his affectionate equerries and grooms of the bedchamber, — at finding a Colonel Hanger substituted for a Colonel Goldsworthy, and a Jack Payne for a Colonel Digby. Moreover, no one knew better than the queen that

any act of the legislature, conferring full regal powers on her eldest son, would be virtually an act of dethroning her consort. The king himself, indeed, asserted after his restoration to reason, that he should have regarded such a proceeding on the part of the legislature as equivalent to a statute of lunacy, and have declined to resume the kingly authority. Another consolation which the queen derived from being left the mistress of her husband's palaces was the means which it afforded her of maintaining that order and decorum at his court which, if the control of the royal household had been allowed to devolve upon his son, could scarcely be expected to remain, for any length of time, either respectable or respected. "The palace," writes Lord Macaulay, "which had now been, during thirty years, the pattern of an English home, would be a public nuisance—a school of profligacy. The drawing-room, from which the frown of the queen had repelled a whole generation of frail beauties, would now be again what it had been in the days of Barbara Palmer and Louisa de Querouaille."

"Pluck down my officers; break my decrees;
For now a time is come to mock at form.
Harry the Fifth is crowned! Up, vanity!
Down, royal state! All you sage counsellors, hence!
And to the English court assemble now,
From every region, apes of idleness."

— *King Henry IV. Part II. Act iv. Sc. 4.*

George, Prince of Wales, Regent of England.

Photo-etching after the painting by John Hoppner.





In the meantime, there seem to have been scarcely any lengths to which the heir to the throne and his friends were not prepared to resort in order to prevent any restriction of his powers and patronage, in the event of his becoming regent. Wedderburn, at this time chief justice of the Common Pleas, even went so far as to broach a proposition, and recommend a line of policy, apparently almost unparalleled in political hardihood. He not only delivered it as his opinion that, by the incapacity of the king, however brief might be the period of his disability, the sovereign authority devolved *de jure* upon the Prince of Wales independent of the will and sanction of the two Houses of Parliament, but he had also the boldness to advise the prince to have recourse to a *coup d'état*, by at once claiming and exercising all the powers vested by the Constitution in the kingly office. Ministers, however, had been apprised of what was in contemplation in the Whig camp, and accordingly it was determined, in the event of any attempt being made to carry Wedderburn's proposition into execution, to seize his person on a charge of high treason and commit him to the Tower.¹

¹ Lords Brougham and Campbell are severally of opinion that, had the prince followed the advice of Loughborough and declared himself regent, a civil war would have been the consequence. "It was the opinion of the lord chief justice," writes Lord Brougham, "that the Prince of Wales should not have waited for even an address of the two Houses; but, considering them as

nonentities while the throne was empty, should at once have proceeded to restore, as it was delicately and daintily termed, the executive branch of the Constitution; in other words, proclaim himself regent, and issue his orders to the troops and the magistrates as if his father were naturally dead, and he had succeeded, in the course of nature, to the vacant crown." Lord Loughborough subsequently denied, in the House of Lords, that he had ever given such advice to the Prince of Wales, but sufficient proof to the contrary exists in his handwriting among the Rosslyn MSS.

CHAPTER VIII.

Contest between Pitt and Fox on the Regency Question—

Fox's Mistake in Claiming the Regency for the Prince as a Right—Sheridan's Threat—Thurlow Retracts His Apostasy; His Grand Climax—Conduct of the Prince and the Duke of York—Thurlow and Pitt Admitted to the King's Presence—Removal of the Royal Family from Windsor—Lady Harcourt's Account of the Cruel Treatment of the King at Kew—The Page Ernst—Appointment of Doctor Willis—His Sanguine Hopes of the King's Recovery—Changes the Treatment of the King—Acts on the King's Sense of His Religious Duties—"King Lear"—The Queen Admitted to an Interview—Fluctuations in the King's Malady.

THE memorable contest in the House of Commons between Pitt and Fox, on the subject of the regency, may be said to have commenced on the 10th of December. Wraxall—for many years a curious and intelligent member of the House of Commons—describes the two months which followed as a period of "greater agitation, violence, and animosity" than any other he remembered. Fox was ill—so ill that, at the assembling of Parliament on the 4th, not only did his altered appearance excite general observation,¹ but on a very

¹ "I never," writes Wraxall, "saw Fox, either previously or subsequently, exhibit so broken and shattered an aspect. His body seemed to be emaciated, his countenance sallow and sickly,

important day, the 8th, he was compelled to absent himself altogether. Nevertheless, he prepared to do battle for his party to the last.

The true nature of the impending contest was, by this time, perfectly well understood by all parties in the House of Commons. Accordingly, when Pitt rose to submit that a committee be appointed for the purpose of searching for precedents, showing the manner in which the sovereign authority had been exercised in former cases of its having been "interrupted by sickness, infancy, or infirmity," Fox at once attacked the proposition as being a direct invasion of what he pronounced to be the legitimate rights of the heir to the throne. For what useful purpose, he asked, did the minister propose to search for precedents? And what were they going to search for? Not for parliamentary precedents, not for precedents in the journals of the House of Commons, but for precedents in the history of England. It was notorious that no such precedent existed. The search he said, would only occasion delay at a crisis when the exigency of the hour demanded that not a moment should be lost.

Had Fox contented himself with using no stronger language than this, his rival might have

his eyes swollen; while his stockings hung about his legs, and he rather dragged himself along, than walked up the floor to take his seat. The attendance, as might be expected, was numerous and tumultuous."

missed the signal triumph which he was destined to achieve. Unfortunately, however, he had adopted the unconstitutional opinions of Lord Loughborough, and was unwise enough to deliver them in the House. There was a remedy, he said, immediately at hand. There was a person in the kingdom, an heir apparent, of full age and capacity to exercise the royal power. In his firm opinion, his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, had as clear and express a right to assume the reins of government, and to take upon him the sovereign authority during the continuance of the king's illness, as if his Majesty had suffered a natural demise. Such language as this not only offended Fox's opponents, but even some of his friends. Pitt saw instantly the advantage which he had gained. Slapping his thigh energetically with his hands, he exclaimed to a friend who sat next him on the treasury bench "I'll un-Whig the gentleman for the rest of his life." Accordingly, as soon as Fox had sat down, he started on his feet. The doctrine, he said, to which the House had just listened, was little less than treason to the Constitution. The heir apparent had no more right to the executive power, than any other person in the realm. In the case of the incapacity of the sovereign, it belonged to the two remaining branches of the legislature to make provision for the temporary interregnum. Let every person in the House, he said, consider that upon their future

proceedings depended their own interests, as well as the interests and honour of a sovereign deservedly the idol of his people. "Let not the House, therefore," he concluded, "rashly annihilate and annul the authority of Parliament, in which the existence of the Constitution was so intimately involved."

The result of the debate was a complete success to the ministerial party. That night, "at White's, all was hurrah and triumph;" at Brooks's all was despondency. "Fox's declaration," writes William Grenville, "has been of no small service to us. Is it not wonderful that such great talents should be conducted with so little judgment?"¹ His friends, too, perceived and lamented the mischief he had done. "Fox's declaration," writes Lord Sheffield, "seems to have done more harm than even I imagined." On the 12th, he attempted to explain away much of his language which had given offence, but apparently to very little purpose; Pitt replying to him in one of his most effective speeches. "Pitt," writes Sir William Young from the House of Commons, "rises higher and higher in general estimation. As I passed the gallery to write this, Marquis of Townshend caught

¹ "Only think," again writes William Grenville, "of Fox's want of judgment, to bring himself and his friends into such a scrape as he has done, by maintaining a doctrine of higher Tory principle than could have been found anywhere since Sir Robert Sawyer's speeches."

my arm, and said, 'A glorious fellow, by —, Young! His speech is that of an angel!'"

It was during the debates on the 12th that Sheridan was guilty of an indiscretion almost equal to that which Fox had committed. "After Fox's recantation was over," writes William Grenville, "the day was closed by such a blunder of Sheridan's as I never knew any man of the meanest talents guilty of before. During the whole time that I have sat in Parliament, in pretty warm times, I never remember such an uproar as was raised by his threatening us with the danger of provoking the prince to assert his right, which were the exact words he used."

Another circumstance favourable to Pitt at this time was the sudden return of the lord chancellor to his allegiance, a step which has been attributed, whether rightly or not, to his having received secret information from one of the royal physicians, Doctor Addington, that a favourable change had taken place in the king's disorder. The first evidence which he exhibited of defection from his new friends occurred during a cautious and trimming speech which he delivered in the House of Lords on the 10th. "The chancellor," writes Lord Bulkeley, "opened enough of his sentiments to show that he means to stand by his colleagues. His speech was not long, but one of the finest I ever heard, and made so strong an impression that we gave him a merry 'Hear! hear!' which, you

know, is not very frequent in the House of Lords."

But it was on the 15th that the House of Peers witnessed the grand climax of Thurlow's treason and effrontery. On that day, in consequence of its being known that the Duke of York intended to speak on the regency question, the upper House was crowded to excess. On the steps of the throne stood three no less celebrated persons than Pitt, Burke, and Wilkes. The Duke of York had no sooner concluded his speech, than the chancellor quitted the woolsack for the purpose of addressing the House. In the most solemn and pathetic manner, and in a state of agitation which continued till a flood of tears came to his relief, he spoke of the great calamity which had befallen the throne and the country. It was, he said, his fixed and unalterable determination to stand by his sovereign, a sovereign who, during a reign which had now continued for twenty-seven years, had ever shown a sacred regard for the principles which had seated the house of Brunswick on the throne of Great Britain. As for himself individually, he continued, his grief at the present moment was naturally more poignant than that of others, on account of the personal kindness and indulgence which he had experienced at the hands of his afflicted master. "My debt of gratitude," he concluded,—and he rolled out, perhaps, the most majestic of those telling sentences with which he

had dazzled a generation,— “my debt of gratitude is indeed ample for the many favours which have been graciously conferred upon me by his Majesty;” and then it was that he delivered that famous peroration, “When I forget my sovereign, may my God forget me!” Pitt, well acquainted as he was with the facts of the chancellor’s recent perfidies, was naturally thunderstruck at such unblushing effrontery. “Oh, the rascal!” escaped his lips — words uttered loud enough to be overheard by General Manners, and probably by others who were standing by. “God forget you?” muttered Wilkes, as he eyed him with his memorable squint; “he’ll see you d——d first!” “Forget you?” said Burke; “why, it’s the best thing that can happen to you!”

But if the conduct of the chancellor, at this time, was discreditable to him, far worse appears to have been the behaviour of the Prince of Wales and of the Duke of York. At the very time when they might have been expected to comport themselves at least with outward decency,—at a time when their father lay prostrated by the most awful calamity which can befall human nature, and while the home of their mother and sisters was a home of desolation and sorrow,—we find their conduct still marked by that undisguised libertinism, and apparently entire want of proper feeling, which had already occasioned so much grief and alarm to the well-wishers of the house

of Brunswick. "The behaviour of the two princes," writes William Grenville, "is such as to shock every man's feelings." And again he writes to Lord Buckingham:—"If we were together, I could tell you some particulars of the Prince of Wales's behaviour toward the king and queen within these few days, that would make your blood run cold." "The princes," writes Lord Bulkeley, "go on in their usual style, both keeping open houses, and employing every means in their power to gain proselytes, attending the Beef-steak Club, Freemason meetings, etc." "The Duke of York never misses a night at Brooks's, where the hawks pluck his feathers unmercifully, and have reduced him to the vowels I. O. U."¹ The prince likewise attends very often, and has taken kindly to play." In one letter of the day, "drinking and singing," are mentioned as the "specifics" of the prince's sorrow; while in another he is spoken of as "being very drunk the other night." Not less indecent than the prince's unfeeling libertinism was the manner in which, by personal importunity and canvass, he endeavoured to obtain "proselytes," for the purpose of opposing the known wishes and undermining the dormant authority of his helpless parent. "Lord Lons-

¹ Only eighteen months had elapsed since the duke's return from Germany, yet, in a letter dated the 20th of February, 1789, we find the Archbishop of Canterbury representing him to have incurred debts to the amount of not less than £60,000.

dale's people," writes William Grenville, "were against us in consequence of a letter written by the Prince of Wales himself, soliciting it as a personal favour." Lord Bulkeley also speaks of the open and undisguised canvasses carried on by the prince and the Duke of York ; and even Fox himself seems to admit that his friend, the prince, had laid himself open to the charge of "grasping" at too much power.

In the meantime, taking into consideration the deep affection and marked partiality which the king had ever manifested for the Duke of York, the conduct of his Royal Highness would seem to be less defensible even than that of his elder brother. The fact is a painful one to relate, that, on the 4th of December, — the day on which Parliament reassembled, and when the king's malady was at its worst, — the graceless youth not only held a meeting of the opposition at his own house, but afterward proceeded to the House of Lords, in order to hear the depositions of the royal physicians read, and to listen to the painful details of his father's lunacy. Moreover, the same evening we track both the brothers to Brooks's, where, in a circle of boon companions as irreverent as themselves, they are said to have been in the habit of indulging in the most shocking indecencies, of which the king's derangement was the topic. On such occasions, we are told, not only did they turn their parents into ridicule, and blab the secrets

of the chamber of sickness at Windsor, but the prince even went to such unnatural lengths as to employ his talents for mimicry, in which he was surpassed by few of his contemporaries, in imitating the ravings and gestures of his stricken father. As for the Duke of York, we are assured that "the brutality of the stupid sot disgusted even the most profligate of his associates."

We must now revert to the afflicted monarch, in whose health, since last we took leave of him on the 28th of November, unhappily no improvement had taken place. The previous night had been passed by him in the most miserable manner. "How woeful, how bitter a day," writes Miss Burney, on the 28th, "in every respect was this!" At a Cabinet council which had been held at Windsor on the preceding day, it was decided that the lord chancellor and the prime minister ought to have ocular evidence of the king's condition, and accordingly, so soon as the meeting broke up, they were separately admitted into his apartment. "The chancellor," writes Miss Burney, "went into his presence with a tremor such as before he had been only accustomed to inspire, and, when he came out, he was so extremely affected by the state in which he saw his royal master and patron, that the tears rolled down his cheeks, and his feet had difficulty to support him." Pitt, though outwardly less agitated than the chancellor, was apparently not less deeply affected at witness-

ing the sad condition of his sovereign. He found the king, as he told his cousin, William Grenville, far better than he had expected, but, nevertheless, evidently in a state of derangement. To his friend George Rose, Pitt gave a similar account. The king's manner to him, he said, was uncommonly kind; his visit seemed to give him great pleasure; and though his conversation incessantly wandered from one topic to another, yet it was remarkable that he remembered and reverted to subjects which they had discussed during their last interview, previously to his illness.

The Cabinet council held at Windsor on the 28th had been summoned for a specific purpose. The physicians had not only remonstrated that the distance of Windsor from London occasioned them great personal inconvenience, but they also urged that exercise in the open air was essentially necessary in the king's state; and as there was no garden at Windsor in which he could walk without being overlooked either from the terrace or from the roofs of the neighbouring houses, they proposed his immediate removal to Kew. So great, however, was known to be the king's dislike to quitting Windsor,—so probable did it seem that the change could only be effected by resorting to force,—that it was apparently not till the physicians had made oath that the removal was absolutely necessary, that their advice was adopted by the Cabinet. The king's aversion to leaving



Windsor, the queen told Miss Burney, was "terrible to think of."

On the 29th, the day fixed upon for the king's removal to Kew, all was confusion and despondency at Windsor. "Shall I ever," writes Miss Burney, "forget the varied emotions of this dreadful day? I rose with the heaviest of hearts, and found my poor royal mistress in the deepest dejection." For her own part, said the queen, her heart misgave her when she thought of the probable consequences, but she felt it to be her duty to bow to the opinions of the physicians. The departure of the queen and the princesses from Windsor, which it had been decided should precede that of the king, presented a most melancholy spectacle. "I believe," writes Miss Burney, "it was about ten o'clock when her Majesty departed. Drowned in tears, she glided along the passage, and got softly into her carriage with two weeping princesses and Lady Courtown, who was to be her lady in waiting during this dreadful residence. Then followed the third princess with Lady Charlotte Finch. They went off without any state or parade, and a more melancholy scene cannot be imagined. There was not a dry eye in the house. The footmen, the housemaids, the porter, the sentinels, all cried, even bitterly, as they looked on."

Unhappily it was only by stratagem — a necessary, perhaps, but still a most cruel one — that the king could be prevailed upon to remove from

Windsor. At this time, the ruling and passionate desire of his affectionate heart was to be allowed to embrace the wife and daughters from whom he had been so long separated, and accordingly, on the faith of a solemn promise that they should be admitted to his presence on his arrival at Kew, he allowed himself to be conducted to his carriage as quietly as if he had been a child. Since the day when Charles the First, on his way to his trial and execution, had wept over the shoulder of the ill-fated Duke of Hamilton at the foot of the steps of the Round Tower, no King of England had quitted Windsor under more mournful circumstances. The same sad domestic group that had watched the departure of the queen with weeping eyes now blessed and prayed for the afflicted king as he passed along. Moreover, in the courtyard, and in its vicinity, were assembled nearly the whole population of Windsor, who with silent reverence and valedictions beheld the melancholy spectacle. The persons in the carriage with the king were his aide-de-camp, General Harcourt, and two of his equerries.

At first, on the royal equipage emerging from under the massive gateway of Henry the Eighth, the king's countenance wore an expression of cheerfulness, but on reaching the iron gates of the little park, he covered his face with his hands and burst into tears. He soon, however, recovered his composure ; pointed out certain objects of interest

which he passed on the road, and referred to the pleasure which he anticipated from again embracing his consort and her daughters. But, unhappily, instead of being accorded that long-looked-for pleasure, a bitter disappointment awaited him. If a contemporary account is to be credited, the king, on reaching Kew, was ushered into a large apartment to which he was unaccustomed, and where he was consigned to the care of the keepers who were in future to be his pages. His faithful equerries, we are told, withdrew from the palace according to orders which they had received, and even the royal physicians are said to have taken their departure at night for London. According to the same account, the king emphatically and pathetically demanded to see his family, but, in cruel mockery of his feelings, it was only through one of the windows that he was allowed to obtain a momentary glimpse of them, and then only of his daughters. Obeying, it is said, the impulse of the moment, he rushed forward to throw up the sash, when, discovering, to his heartrending mortification, that it had been fastened down, he was seized with a violent paroxysm, in the midst of which the princesses were hurried from their father's presence, and the poor king dragged from the window, uttering pitiable entreaties to be allowed to speak to his children.

Such is the account which we have — on what ought to be considered as high authority — of

the treatment which George the Third experienced on being entrapped to the dismal palace of Kew.¹ But still worse remains to be related: "The unhappy patient," we are told on the same authority, "upon whom this, the most terrible visitation of heaven, had fallen, was no longer dealt with as a human being. His body was immediately enclosed in a machine, which left it no liberty of motion. He was sometimes chained to a staple. He was frequently beaten and starved, and, at the best, he was kept in subjection by menacing and violent language. The history of the king's illness showed that the most exalted station did not wholly exempt the sufferer from this stupid and inhuman usage. The king's disorder manifested itself principally in unceasing talk, but no disposition to violence was exhibited. Yet he was subjected constantly to the severe discipline of the strait-waistcoat; he was secluded from the queen and his family; he was denied the use of a knife and fork, of scissors, or any instrument with which he might inflict bodily injury. Such petty, vexatious treatment could not fail to aggravate a disorder the leading symptom of which was nervous irritability,

¹ So unfitted was Kew to be a winter residence, that not only were the bedrooms of the princesses without carpets, but so out of repair was the building that Colonel Digby was obliged to procure sandbags, to keep the wind from penetrating through their doors and windows. Miss Burney, who had accompanied her royal mistress to Kew, describes the palace as being in "a state of cold and discomfort past all imagination."

caused by overapplication, extreme abstemiousness, and domestic anxiety. It would have been well if the errors of the physicians had been confined to ignorance. But their negligence was still more reprehensible. While the poor maniac was deprived of those tender offices which his wife and daughters might have rendered, he was abandoned to the care of low mercenaries, and so little discrimination was observed in the choice of his attendants, that the charge of his person devolved chiefly on a German page named Ernst, who was utterly unworthy to be trusted with the care of the humblest of his fellow creatures. This man, who had been raised by the patronage of his Majesty, repaid the kindness of his royal master with the most brutal ingratitude. He went so far as to strike the helpless king ; and on one occasion, when his Majesty wished to protract his exercise in the gardens at Kew, Ernst seized him in his arms, carried him into a chamber, and, throwing him violently on a sofa, exclaimed in an insolent manner, to the attendants, ‘ There is your king for you.’ ” It is further intimated that these outrages, “ perpetrated in the seclusion of Kew,” happily ceased on Doctor Willis being called in as one of the king’s medical attendants, when “ the brutal Ernst was dismissed altogether.”

These facts, as we have already stated, are related on high authority, — that authority being Elizabeth, Countess Harcourt, who was not only

a lady of the bedchamber to Queen Charlotte and sister-in-law to General Harcourt, who accompanied the king to Kew, but who also lived on terms of particular intimacy with their Majesties.¹ Moreover, as regards the painful episode of the German page, Ernst, Lady Harcourt goes so far as to vouch that, after the king's recovery, she heard the story from his Majesty's own lips. Nevertheless, we cannot but think that these terrible details are greatly, though doubtless not wilfully, exaggerated. In the first place, these barbarities are stated to have commenced on the removal of the king to Kew in the month of October, and to have lasted till the month of December, "when happily Doctor Willis was called in," thus extending the period of his Majesty's sufferings over several weeks. But the fact is, that instead of the king having been removed to Kew in the month of October, it was not till the 29th of November that his removal took place, and consequently, as Doctor Willis was called in so early as Friday, the 5th of December, the period is, of course, reduced to only six days. Moreover, considerable doubt seems to exist whether violent measures were resorted to at all, so long as the king was under the charge of his regular physicians; in fact, whether Doctor Willis was not himself the first to advocate and to employ them. From Miss Burney, for instance, we learn that, up

¹ Lady Harcourt would even seem to have been an inmate of Kew Palace during some period of the king's illness.

to the date of the king's removal from Windsor, not only had there prevailed among his medical attendants the greatest disinclination to put any force upon him, lest it might be resented by him in the case of his recovery, but that "no human being dared even mention compulsion." "His smallest resistance," said Sir Lucas Pepys, "would have called up the whole country to his fancied rescue."¹

¹ Even more staggering are the following extracts from the depositions of the royal physicians, taken before the committee of the House of Commons, from the 7th to the 13th of January, 1789:

Examination of Sir Lucas Pepys.

"*Question* — Have not symptoms of irritation in his Majesty's case been frequent since you were last examined here? (viz., on the 8th of December.)

"*Sir Lucas Pepys* — Very frequent.

"*Q.* — Whether the means of coercion have not been more frequently resorted to since that period than before?

"*Sir L. P.* — More frequently.

"*Q.* — How long before your last examination were the means of coercion at all resorted to?

"*Sir L. P.* — I believe, only once, if at all; I am not sure."

Examination of the Rev. Dr. Francis Willis.

"*Q.* — When did you first begin the mode of coercion?

"*Dr. Willis* — I really don't know the particular day.

"*Q.* — Whether means of stronger coercion have not been used since your last examination than before?

"*Dr. Willis* — Certainly, a more firm coercion, but not so teasing to the patient."

Examination of Dr. Richard Warren.

"*Q.* — Has any rational mode of control or coercion been omitted?

Lady Harcourt's further account of the cruel state of isolation in which the king found himself at Kew — of the withdrawal of his faithful equerries, the hurried departure of the physicians, and the consignment of his person to mere pages and keepers — must also be received with some qualification. So far, indeed, from the king having been so utterly deserted, as stated by that lady, we have evidence not only that a physician, as well as either a surgeon or an apothecary, regularly slept in the palace, but that both an equerry and a groom of the bedchamber were in constant attendance.

But the most painful part of Lady Harcourt's narrative is doubtless the insolent and cowardly treatment which the defenceless king is said to have experienced in Kew Gardens at the hands of his German page, Ernst. We must at once confess that we discredit the truth of this singularly painful story. In the first place, the outrage is stated to have been perpetrated previously to Doctor Willis having been called in, on whose arrival the "brutal Ernst" is said to have been dismissed. Now, inasmuch as we have the most incontestable evidence that it was not till the 11th

"Dr. Warren — Not that I know of, since his Majesty came to Kew."

It further appears that "strict coercion" was not resorted to till on or about the 12th of December, viz., after the calling in of Doctor Willis.

of December that the king first took exercise in Kew Gardens, and as Doctor Willis had certainly been called in on the 5th, this part of the statement is easily confuted. But even admitting the possibility of Ernst having been bold and brutal enough to commit so atrocious an assault on his sovereign, is it credible that so unparalleled an outrage as that of a king being dragged into one of his own palaces by one of his own menials, should have been committed without its becoming known either to the queen or to others in authority at Kew; and, if known, is it at all more credible that so cruel, insulting, and treasonable an act should have been left unresented and unpunished till the arrival of an irregular medical practitioner, with whom not one of the royal family had previously had any communication whatever? Moreover, let it be remembered how completely the level lawns of Kew were overlooked by the numerous windows of the palace, and further, that the king was lodged, not in a sequestered and half-tenanted mansion, but where there were, under the same roof with him, the gentlemen of his household, the medical attendants, and the usual complement of servants, male and female. In the palace, also, we find residing the queen, the Princess Royal, the Princesses Augusta and Elizabeth, Lady Courtown, Madame Schwellenberg, Miss Burney, and Miss Planta, to each and all of whom he was an object of love and veneration.

Surely, then, either curiosity, accident, or an anxious desire to behold their beloved sovereign return in safety from his walk, must have attracted one or more of these numerous persons toward the windows of the palace. No doubt, could it be clearly proved that Ernst received his dismissal at this period, some degree of credit might be claimed for Lady Harcourt's extraordinary statement. So far, however, from his having been so dismissed, the author, on searching the books in the lord chamberlain's department, discovered the name of "George Ernst, Esq.," registered as a page of the back-stairs, with a salary of £80 a year, so late as the 15th of April, 1801, when one Samuel Cox was sworn in, in his room. Not improbably Ernst may have died shortly after this date, since, on referring to the books of the treasury, the author found that by two royal warrants, severally dated the 14th of October, 1801, a pension of £150 a year was granted to Dorothy Ernst, widow, and a pension of £50 to Charlotte Ernst, spinster; these persons being probably the wife and daughter of George Ernst. To these evidences of the Ernst family having enjoyed the favour of royalty, may be added the further fact that, some years afterward, the pension of the latter was increased to £150.

After all, the story of Ernst seems to be capable of easy explanation. It was one of the peculiarities attending the king's subsequent

restoration to reason, that, for many weeks afterward, he found it impossible to shake off the conviction that certain things were not realities, which, in fact, had had no other foundation than in his own distempered fancy; and accordingly many painful particulars that he related to Lady Harcourt were in all probability, not what had really occurred, but what he morbidly imagined had taken place. It should be mentioned that to Miss Burney, as well as to Lady Harcourt, the king represented himself as having been violently handled by Ernst, but as the conversation with the former lady took place while the king's mind was still partially deranged, she seems to have attributed his conviction on the subject to what we conceive to have been the true cause—a mere illusion of his malady. "The king," writes Lord Eldon's biographer, "during one of his illnesses complained to Lord Eldon, who related the story to Mr. Farrer, that a man in the employ of some of his physicians had knocked him down. 'When I got up again,' added the king, 'I said my foot had slipped, and ascribed my fall to that. It would not do for me to admit that the king had been knocked down by any one.'"

In some respects Lady Harcourt's general narrative is corroborated by that of Miss Burney, more especially as regards the painful deception by which the king was inveigled from Windsor to Kew. We further learn from Miss Burney that

the queen was highly displeased at promises having been made in her name which there was no intention of keeping.

The addition of Doctor Willis, and afterward of his son, Dr. John Willis, to the staff of royal physicians, proved to be an important era in the annals of his Majesty's distemper. Doctor—or rather the Reverend—Francis Willis, rector of St. John's, Wapping, had long enjoyed a reputation in the county of Lincoln for his successful treatment of persons afflicted with mental maladies. Like most persons who achieve great success in a profession for which they have not been regularly educated, he seems to have been looked upon as a mere quack by some, and as a paragon of intelligence by others. The medical profession naturally regarded him as an interloper; indeed, on one occasion, it was only by obtaining a doctor's diploma from the University of Oxford that he appears to have escaped a prosecution. "Doctor Willis," writes Lord Sheffield, "is a clergyman, and keeps a madhouse in Lincolnshire. He is considered by some as not much better than a mountebank, and not far different from some of those that are confined in his house." The Archbishop of Canterbury, however, thought differently of him. "Since Doctor Willis, of Lincolnshire," writes his Grace, "has been called in, our hope has been more firm and constant, and at this moment stands very high. He has had great experience in

this malady for eight and twenty years, and great success." With the exception of the regular physicians, the inmates of Kew Palace seem to have been one and all favourably impressed with the Doctors Willis. In the opinion of Colonel Digby, they were "fine, lively, natural, independent characters" — praise which we find Miss Burney according them so soon as she made their acquaintance. "I was extremely struck," she writes, "with both these physicians. Doctor Willis is a man of ten thousand; open, honest, dauntless, light-hearted, innocent, and high-minded. I see him impressed with the most animated reverence and affection for his royal patient, but it is wholly for his character, not a whit for his rank. Doctor John, his eldest son, is extremely handsome, and inherits, in a milder degree, all the qualities of his father." Miss Burney subsequently speaks of them as "most delightful people, all originality, openness, and goodness."¹

That the king, notwithstanding his afflicted condition, retained his old love of humour, may be gleaned by the following anecdote. Aware of Doctor Willis being a clergyman, he taxed him at their first interview with having aban-

¹ "Doctor Willis," writes Hannah More, who met him at the table of the Bishop of London, "is the very image of simplicity; quite a good, plain, old-fashioned, country parson; he is seventy-three."

doned his sacred calling for profit, a rebuke to which the latter rejoined that the Saviour had cured demoniacs. "Yes," said the king, "but he did not get seven hundred a year for it."

Doctor Willis was no sooner established at Kew than he attributed the king's malady to what appear to have been its true causes—to the king's laborious attention to business, to the severe bodily exercise which he had accustomed himself to take, to his ascetic abstemiousness, and the want of a proper amount of sleep. Moreover, while the regular physicians spoke with gloom of the prospects of the king's recovery, Doctor Willis never hesitated to pronounce it, subject to the will of Providence, as, humanly speaking, certain. "Willis," writes William Grenville, on the 7th of December, "has, I understand, already acquired a complete ascendancy over him, which is the point for which he is particularly famous."

The mode of treatment, also, advocated by Doctor Willis, differed materially from that of the orthodox medical attendants, and as he was entrusted with the command of what was called the inner apartment, and of the management of the king's person, he was to a certain extent independent of them. Anxious to remove some of the irritating restraints to which the king was subjected, he adopted at times a liberality of treatment which astonished and terrified his more nervous colleagues. He had scarcely been twenty-

four hours domesticated at Kew, when, as Doctor Warren afterward informed a committee of the House of Commons, he not only allowed the king a penknife with which to cut his nails, but even permitted him to shave himself. Being subsequently questioned by the committee on the subject, "His Majesty," said Doctor Willis, "had not been shaved for a long while—perhaps a fortnight or three weeks. The person that had been used to shave him could not complete the parts of his upper and lower lips; and being confident from the professions and humour of his Majesty at that moment, I suffered his Majesty to shave his lips himself. Then he desired he might have his whole face lathered, that he might just run it over with a razor, and he did so in a very calm manner. His nails also wanted cutting very much, and upon his assurance, and upon my confidence in his looks, I suffered him to cut his own nails with a penknife, while I stood by him. It is necessary for a physician, especially in such cases, to be able to judge at the moment whether he can confide in the professions of his patient; and I never was disappointed in my opinion, whether professions of the patient were to be relied on or no." He was sure, said Doctor Willis to the king, as he presented the razor to him, that his Majesty was too good a Christian, and had too much sense of what he owed to his people, to attempt self-destruction.

It was, in fact, to the strong sense entertained by George the Third of his religious duties, that Doctor Willis appears to have, in a great degree, rested his hopes of the king's ultimate and perfect recovery. It was true, said Willis, that, as a consequence of his exalted position, a sense of humiliation, on his first restoration to reason, would probably be stronger in his mind than might be expected in that of an ordinary individual. He added, however, that, from the opportunities which he had been afforded of acquainting himself with his Majesty's principles and notions of religion, he had the greater hopes that the king would, with proper feelings of resignation, attribute his great affliction to the wise will and dispensation of Heaven, and would be comforted and supported by that conviction. One circumstance is worthy of being recorded—that, even when his “case was generally thought desperate,” his language was remarked to be more choice, his conversation more brisk, and the movements of his body more graceful, than previously to his derangement. When free from paroxysm, his gentleness and resignation are said to have been singularly touching. According to Doctor Willis's account to Hannah More, “he never saw so much natural sweetness and goodness of mind, united to so much piety, as in the king.” Little reason as he had to love Lord North, the mournful reflection that his old servant was afflicted with

blindness more than once affected him even to tears.

It was about this time that Doctor Warren, on entering the king's sick-apartment, was not less astonished than displeased at finding that the pathetic play of "King Lear" had been placed in his hands. Nor was he less affected by the observations made by the king on a story so closely and painfully resembling his own. His Majesty, in answer to Warren's inquiry through whose agency he had obtained the volume he saw in his hands, intimated that it was through Doctor Willis. This fact was stoutly denied by Willis, yet the king proved to be substantially correct in his statement. The circumstances connected with this incident are not uninteresting. He had conceived a morbid desire to reperuse that noble drama, but Willis, though he had himself never read it,—as appears by his subsequent evidence before the House of Commons,—was sufficiently well aware of the mournful parallel between the condition of his illustrious patient and that of the

"Poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man"

immortalised by Shakespeare, and consequently he very properly declined to comply with the king's wishes. His Majesty's knowledge of literature, however, being superior to that of his physician, he contrived to outwit him. Twenty years previously, "King Lear," as altered by George Colman,

had been performed with very indifferent success at Covent Garden Theatre, yet, notwithstanding its failure, Colman had thought so favourably of his "corrections" as to incorporate the altered play in a subsequent edition of his collected dramatic writings. Accordingly, the king, with the advantage of this knowledge, requested that Colman's works might be brought to him, and as Willis offered no objection, he thus obtained possession of the forbidden drama.

It used to be related, with tears in her eyes, by the king's eldest daughter, the Queen of Wurtemberg, that the first time, after her father's recovery, that she and her sisters, the Princesses Augusta and Elizabeth, were allowed to visit him, he turned the conversation to the mournful drama which had so impressed itself on his imagination. "It is very beautiful," he said, "very affecting, and very awful. I am like poor Lear," he added; "but, thank God! I have no Regan, no Goneril; but three Cordelias."

On the 11th of December, as we have already intimated, the king took his first walk in Kew Gardens. As he passed underneath the apartments occupied by his children, he wistfully looked up to the windows, complaining "very heavily" that they would not even show themselves to him. "In consequence," said Doctor Willis, in his evidence, "the next day I did desire that they should appear, and myself stood at the

window with two of the princesses when his Majesty was coming by ; and his Majesty showed extravagant joy at the sight of them, though he said his eyes did not suffer him to see the Princess Amelia as well as he could wish." That same evening, this beloved child was led by Doctor Willis to her father. Holding her on his knee, he conjured her to go and fetch her mother — a mission of love to which Doctor Willis was induced to give his consent, and thus the king and queen were allowed an interview which lasted for about a quarter of an hour ; the king all the time holding his consort's hand in his own, and occasionally carrying it with touching devotion to his lips. It was apparently, however, in consequence of objections being raised by the other physicians, that the royal pair were permitted but one more interview at this period. Week after week, from that time, were destined to elapse before the queen was again permitted to enter her husband's apartment. During that anxious interval, the king's disorder continued constantly fluctuating from better to worse, and from worse to better ; his condition sometimes filling with bright hopes the hearts of the secluded inmates of Kew Palace, and sometimes occasioning a return to the deepest anxiety and gloom. Unfortunately, the king's medical attendants still differed in opinion in regard to the character of his malady. For instance, in the middle of January we find Doctor Warren

intimating to the queen that he considered the king to be "rather worse" than he had been at Windsor; while Doctor Willis, on the other hand, was still all hope. Neither was another of the royal physicians, Sir Lucas Pepys, much less sanguine. "All the private accounts of the king," writes Hannah More to her sister, on the 6th of January, "are still better than the public ones. They say he talks to Willis of his complaint, and of the best method of treating it. He spoke with great calmness and soundness of mind of the King of Spain's death.¹ 'I cannot be such a hypocrite,' he said, 'as to pretend to be sorry, for he was never a friend to me or to this country.'" Again, a few days afterward, the same gifted lady writes: "The poor king, the other night, after Doctor Willis had read prayers to him, prayed aloud for himself. On the 17th, he said to the page 'Remember that to-morrow is the queen's birthday, and I insist upon having a new coat.' As for Pitt, he goes on triumphantly."

¹ Charles the Third of Spain died on the 14th of December, 1788, at the age of seventy-three.

CHAPTER IX.

Party Spirit Invades the King's Sick-Chamber — Attacks on the Queen — Progress of the Regency Bill — Ministerial Arrangements in Anticipation of a Regency — Defections from the Court — Favourable Turn in the King's Malady — The Queen Readmitted to Him — Burke's Speeches in the Commons — The Chancellor's Interviews with the King — The Princes' Visit to Their Father; Their Unfilial Conduct — The Duke of Queensberry Dismissed — The King Resumes His Correspondence with Pitt — His Gratitude for Fidelity — The Physicians Dismissed — General Illumination — Removal of the Court to Windsor — The Thanksgiving at St. Paul's; Conduct of the Prince — Balls and Fêtes to Celebrate the King's Recovery — The Queen Resents the Ill-treatment Received by the King — Bishop Watson — The Prince of Wales's Letters to the King — His Renewed Insults — Duel between the Duke of York and Colonel Lennox — The Prince's Complaints of the Queen.

IN the meantime, party feeling continued to run as high as ever both in and out of Parliament, men forming their opinions of the king's condition according to their respective wishes or fears. "There is no circle into which one goes," writes Storer to Lord Auckland, "where one person does not tell you that the king is now so near the reëstablishment, both of his bodily and mental health, that he will meet his Parliament in a fort-

night; and some other contradicts him flatly by asserting that both his mind and body are in the most desperate situation." "Opposition," writes William Grenville, "have been taking inconceivable pains to spread the idea that his disorder is incurable." Again, Lord Sydney writes to Lord Cornwallis, "The acrimony is beyond anything you can conceive. The ladies are, as usual, at the head of all animosity, and are distinguished by caps, ribands, and other such emblems of party." Madame Huber, in a letter to Mrs. Eden, speaks of the fashionable "Regency Caps," and mentions the cheapest as costing seven guineas.

Party animosity even invaded the sick-chamber of the king, and biassed the conduct of his medical attendants. William Grenville speaks of them as "so warped by party, or by an anxiety to pay their court to the prince, as certainly to deserve the severest reprehension." Such persons as loved the king, or who wished well to Mr. Pitt's government, naturally clung to every word of hope which escaped from the lips of Doctor Willis, while the prince's friends, relying on the authority of the orthodox Warren, pronounced the king to be a confirmed lunatic, and Willis a mere empiric and creature of Pitt. Sir Sidney Smith, for instance, in a letter to Lord Auckland, speaks of "the opposition physicians" as being so clamorous in their efforts to invalidate the testimony of Willis, that the public had become "strangely divided in doubts,

hopes, and fears." "It is a strange subject," writes the Archbishop of Canterbury, "for party to exist upon, and disgraceful to the country that it should be so; but so it is." Wilberforce, in his diary, incidentally speaks of the Speaker of the House of Commons as being apparently "be-Warrened."

And into these party animosities and discussions was dragged the fair name of the unhappy lady who had never in her life interfered in politics; who had ever shrunk with a morbid horror from public notoriety; whose ruling and self-devoting object it had been, for more than a quarter of a century, to promote the happiness and dignity of a beloved husband, and whose hopes and fears were now all centred in the sick-chamber of her stricken lord. Next to his restoration to health, she prayed that she might be enabled to preserve his kingly power for him unimpaired, and that, in the happy event of his recovery, her conduct might meet with his approval. Chilled by the disheartening looks, and disgusted by the party spirit which she discovered in the regular physicians, she naturally flew for comfort to the hopeful words of the single-hearted Lincolnshire clergyman. Yet, on the score of these amiable feelings, the queen, both in Parliament and by the press, was constantly and cruelly accused of aiming at political and personal power; in fact, of being in collusion with Willis to keep the king's real state of health a secret from

the public, and thus excluding the prince, her son, from the possession of his legitimate rights. Moreover, at the head of those who brought these baseless accusations against the afflicted queen, she had the mortification to find her own eldest and favourite child. That the prince, whether unwittingly or not, did his mother the greatest injustice, appears to be freely admitted even by his own friend and groom of the stole, Lord Southampton. Speaking of the prince's conduct at this period, Lord Southampton writes to Lord Cornwallis on the 6th of March, 1790, "It is a great misfortune, and, I shall always think, originated in error. Nature had certainly imprinted in the mother's breast a love to her eldest son beyond the power of ambition and competition to eradicate, and I am convinced that the part that she took was doubly to secure the power to her husband, if he should recover, and to use it as her son should direct, in case all chance of recovery should cease." Party feeling, however, ran too high to listen to reason. "You will see in the opposition papers," writes William Grenville to Lord Buckingham, "that they are beginning to abuse the queen in the most open and scandalous manner." Some of the stories which were propagated to her disadvantage were indeed "scandalous." What, asks Horace Walpole, will the king, if he recovers, think of the queen and her Pitt? Will he be pleased at her having attained a power which he never

intended to impart to her? "Will he be quite satisfied with the codicil to his will, which she surreptitiously obtained from him in his frenzy, in the first agony of her grief?" "How would the king on his recovery," inquired Burke in the House of Commons, "be pleased at seeing the patronage of the household taken from the Prince of Wales, his representative, and given to the queen? He must be shocked at the idea." "What," also asks the Prince of Wales himself, "will probably be the nature of the king's feelings on the happy day of his recovery, when informed of the injury which has been inflicted on the Crown and on the rights of his family, by the degrading curtailment of the kingly authority in the person of his son?"¹ Yet, when the king subsequently recovered his reason, so far was he from being dissatisfied with the conduct of his consort, that, if anything could have added to the deep affection which he entertained for her, and the entire confidence he had ever placed in her discretion, it was the anxious solicitude and devotion with which she had watched over his interests during the period of his afflicting

¹ The prince's reply to Mr. Pitt, dated 2d January, 1789. We have the authority of Sir Gilbert Elliot that this celebrated letter was written by Burke, with some alterations — which Sir Gilbert thinks were not for the better — by Sheridan and others. The prince, in a note to Lord Loughborough, speaks of Pitt's proposed restrictions on the regency as, in his opinion, "such as no dictator could possibly ever have been barefaced enough to have brought forward."

visitation. That the queen was deeply distressed by the public attacks which were made upon her, there can be no question. "My poor royal mistress," writes Miss Burney, "now droops. I grieve — grieve to see her. But her own name and conduct called in question — who can wonder she is shocked and shaken?" Sir Sidney Smith, about this time, speaks of the queen "as worn to a skeleton;" and Miss Burney relates that she was easily moved to tears.

In the meantime, the bill which was to confer the regency upon the Prince of Wales, and to empower him to dismiss the present administration, was making tolerably rapid progress through Parliament. On the 12th of February it finally passed the House of Commons. The day on which it was to be read for the third time in the House of Lords was close at hand. The opposition were in high glee. The new ministerial arrangements were in every mouth. The Duke of Portland was to have been first lord of the treasury; Fox and Lord Stormont, secretaries of state; the Duke of York, commander-in-chief; Earl Fitzwilliam, first lord of the admiralty; Earl Spencer, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; Sheridan, treasurer of the navy; and Fitzpatrick, secretary at war. Lord North, it was understood, declined being a member of the Cabinet. A new batch of field-marshal's was to have been made, to consist of the new regent, the Duke of York, their uncle,

the Duke of Gloucester, and General Conway. All the colonels, down to the prince's friend, Lord Rawdon, were to have been promoted to be major-generals. Even the names of the regent's intended aides-de-camp appeared in the newspapers. Mrs. Fitzherbert, it was said, was to have been created a duchess, and, as a matter of course, the great seal was to have been given to Lord Loughborough. "On Friday night," writes the Archbishop of Canterbury, "an odd thing happened at a great assembly and ball at Devonshire House, given for all the world. When it was very full, the doors flew open, and 'lord chancellor' was announced; when lo! Lord Loughborough walked in. The servant probably considered him, and had been used to call him so, three weeks ago."

That, during the king's illness, there should have been many defections to the prince's side from among placemen and the people of the court, was, perhaps, nothing more than was to be expected. Of the lower grades not fewer than four of the king's pages—including the king's confidential page of the back-stairs, William Ramus¹—subsequently lost their places for communicating private intelligence to the Prince of Wales. Of the higher grades, in addition to the lord chancellor and others, may be mentioned the names of the Dukes of Queensberry and Northumberland, notwithstanding the former—the millionaire "Old

¹ The "Billy Ramus" of Peter Pindar's ribald verse.

Q" of the caricaturists and the stews — had been for nearly thirty years a lord of the king's bed-chamber, and that the house of Percy, or rather Smithson, were under great obligations to their sovereign. To Lord Cornwallis Lord Sydney writes on the 21st of February: "The Duke of Northumberland, whose ill humour broke out as soon as he had got his blue riband, has been, with Rawdon, at the head of what has been called the armed neutrality. These too have joined the prince; are the most inveterate and hostile of anybody, covered as they are with the poor king's favours. Gratitude was not, in the king's melancholy situation, to be expected from Stormont and Loughborough; and they boast that, notwithstanding their obligations to his Majesty, their attachment is to the Constitution. I will not dwell upon this filthy subject even to state the filthiest conduct of North, who is led down to the House to act under Sheridan, to joke upon the king's misfortunes. Thank God! the country in all parts, and both houses of Parliament have nobly stood by the king. More affection and concern could not have been shown, and his Majesty will have the satisfaction of finding how much he is personally beloved."

In the midst, however, of this discreditable and exciting state of affairs, the bulletins which made their appearance at St. James's began to be worded in much less disheartening terms than had been

the case of late, and consequently the countenances of the prince's friends were obliged to grow correspondingly rueful. The king's malady, in fact, had taken a favourable turn. For instance, when, on the 2d of February, Miss Burney accidentally encountered and conversed with him in Kew Gardens — notwithstanding there was still a wildness in his eyes, and although his speech was still nervously rapid, and sometimes almost incoherent — his countenance, as he laid his hands upon her two shoulders and kissed her cheek, expressed “all its usual benignity ;” the meeting leaving altogether upon her mind a sanguine hope of his early recovery. Immediately after Miss Burney's return to the palace, we find the queen eagerly listening to her recital of what had passed. “Her astonishment,” writes the former, “and her eagerness to hear every particular, were very great.” “Walking in the garden with Doctor Willis,” writes Hannah More, “the latter descried two or three of the workmen, and ordered them to withdraw. ‘Willis,’ said the king, ‘you do not know your own business. Let the men come back again. You ought to accustom me to see people by degrees, that I may be prepared for seeing them more at large.’ Mrs. Boscawen's house joins Kew Gardens. Seeing the workmen had made a fire to burn rubbish, he said, ‘Pray put out that fire directly. Don't you see it smokes Mrs. Boscawen's house?’”

A day or two after the king had encountered Miss Burney, his equerries were not only allowed to attend him in the evening, but, as will be seen by the following letter, the queen was readmitted to his sick-chamber.

Queen Charlotte to the Bishop of Worcester.

“KEW, Feb. 7, 1789.

“MY LORD :— When I was last night with the king he inquired very anxiously after you, and seemed pleased to hear of your having been at Kew to inform yourself after him. He also gave me the sermon for you of Mr. Thomas Willis, and ordered me to send it as soon as possible, and to express how much he wished to know your opinion about it. I am likewise to introduce this new acquaintance of ours to you, which I shall do by a letter through him ; and I hope, nay, I am pretty sure that you will like him, as he really is a very modest man, and, by his conduct in this house, gains everybody’s approbation. I am sorry to hear that your visit at Kew should have proved so painful to you as to give you the gout, but I hope to hear that it is not a very severe attack.

“CHARLOTTE.

“P. S. — My good lord, this letter was wrote yesterday, but no opportunity found to send it ; the consequence of which is, that the sermon is brought by its author, whom I hope you will approve of.”

From this time the king's health continued gradually and satisfactorily to improve. On the 14th we find him visited by the queen and princesses in the evening; on the 16th Miss Burney mentions the delight which prevailed in the royal household on its being known that the king and queen were walking arm in arm in Richmond Gardens; and on the 17th the bulletin pronounced his Majesty to be in a state of convalescence. Yet Fox writes on this very day from Bath to Fitzpatrick: "I leave this place on Thursday, but stay for letters; and therefore, if you could let me know by the return of the post on what day the regency is like to commence, I should be obliged to you." Fox's friends, however, were evidently much less sanguine than himself. "If it were possible," he writes, "to do anything to cure that habitual spirit of despondency and fear that characterises the Whig party, it would be a good thing; but I suppose that is impossible."

Doubtless to those whose fortunes were depending upon the chances of the heir apparent becoming regent, his Majesty's convalescence was a bitter pill to swallow. Neither would the prince himself, nor the Duke of York, seem to have been much less disappointed than their friends. "I have not heard as yet," writes Lord Bulkeley, "but conclude they were both rioting and drunk at the masquerade, as they were at one a week ago, The truth is that they are quite desperate, and

endeavour to drown their cares, disappointments, and internal chagrin, in wine and dissipation." But the person whom the prospect of the king's recovery plunged into the wildest extravagances seems to have been Edmund Burke, whose indecent personalities in the House of Commons, during the delicate discussions on the king's illness, are apparently scarcely compatible with a healthy mind. "Mr. Burke," writes a contemporary, "is almost mad, and will be quite so, no doubt, if the king recovers." The House of Commons, he once told them, might bring back a king, but it would be a king subdued and quieted by coercion. "Did the House," he exclaimed on another occasion, "recollect that they were talking of a sick king, of a monarch smitten by the hand of Omnipotence; that the Almighty had hurled him from his throne, and plunged him into a condition which drew down upon him the pity of the meanest peasant in his kingdom?" At a time, he added, when the sovereign was struck by the hand of Heaven, "ought they to make a mockery of him, to put a crown of thorns on his head, a reed in his hand, and, dressing him in a raiment of purple, to cry, Hail, King of the Britons!" Another notable person of the day, whose blood boiled with wrath at the prospect of the king's restoration to power, was his old maligner, Horace Walpole. "The king," he writes, "has returned, not to what the courtiers call his sense, but to his non-

sense. I do not doubt," he adds, "but the nation will grow drunk with the loyalty of rejoicing, for kings grow popular by whatever way they lose their heads." Walpole was perfectly correct in his estimate of the amount of national joy which the news of the king's convalescence was destined to excite. "Nobody," wrote William Grenville, "talks, writes, thinks, or dreams of anything else."

On the 17th of February the king was considered well enough to receive a visit from the lord chancellor; it being understood, however, that all discussion on state affairs was to be carefully avoided. "No politics," he said at this time; "my head is not strong enough for that subject." On the 20th the chancellor was admitted to a second interview, when he recounted in general terms to the king the outline of what had occurred during his illness. "Pitt," writes William Grenville, "has seen the chancellor since his return from Kew to-day. He says that he never saw, at any period, the king more composed, collected, or distinct, and that there was not the least trace or appearance of disorder." On the following day William Grenville writes, "The accounts this morning are as good as can be;" and again, on this day, Lord Sydney writes to Earl Cornwallis: "The chancellor was yesterday with his Majesty, and for the first time talked to him upon business, and opened to him in part

the measures which had been taken during his confinement. I understand that his Majesty was by no means the worse for this conversation. Doctor Willis, who attends him, says that, were he a private man, he should advise his following now his usual occupation, as the mode of living most likely to restore him. But, God knows! his Majesty will have a severe trial when he is informed of all that has passed during the unhappy interval. Every possible care will no doubt be taken to prepare him. You will hear from other hands, probably, that the Prince of Wales has got complete possession of the Duke of York, and that they had meditated such changes in the state and the army as would have grieved him exceedingly. No scruple has been made of declaring that a general sweep of all places would be made, if the regency were to last only a day."

Among the persons most eager to obtain early interviews with the convalescent monarch, were the two princes themselves. Sooner or later, as they were well aware, their father must be made acquainted with the circumstances of their late unfilial conduct, and accordingly it was of much importance to them to be the first to tell their own story, and to tell it in their own way. It still continued necessary, however, that the king should avoid all exciting subjects of conversation, and consequently when, on the 23d of February, he at length received his sons, it was in the pres-

ence of the queen, and with the injunction that only ordinary topics were to be discussed. Slight reason as he had to be pleased with the two princes, he nevertheless welcomed them with touching affection. To Colonel Digby he observed, as their names were announced, "The house of Brunswick never shed tears;" yet, at the very moment when he uttered the words, the tears were ready to burst from his eyes. To Lord Buckingham, Lord Bulkeley writes on the following day: "Lord Winchelsea, who was at Kew the whole time, told me that the prince and Duke of York, though appointed at one, did not arrive till half-past three; and that, when they came out, they told Colonel Digby that they were delighted with the king's being so well, and remarked that two things, in the half-hour's conference which they had with him, had struck them very forcibly, — that he had observed to them how much better he played at picquet than Mr. Charles Hawkins, and that since he had been ill he had rubbed up all his Latin.¹ And these facts, which are facts, I expect to hear magnified by the Carlton House runners into instances of insanity."

Lord Bulkeley proved tolerably correct in his conjectures. The same day William Grenville writes

¹ Twenty-four years afterward, when the king was for the last time labouring under insanity, we find him making use of Latin words, in order to prevent his meaning being understood by those who overheard him.

to Lord Buckingham: "The two princes were at Kew yesterday, and saw the king in the queen's apartment. She was present the whole time, a precaution for which, God knows, there was but too much reason. They kept him waiting a considerable time before they arrived, and, after they left him, drove immediately to Mrs. Armstead's in Park Street, in hopes of finding Fox there, to give him an account of what had passed. He not being in town, they amused themselves yesterday evening with spreading about a report that the king was still out of his mind, and in quoting phrases of his, to which they gave that turn. It is certainly a decent and becoming thing that, when all the king's physicians, all his attendants, and his two principal ministers, agree in pronouncing him well, his two sons should deny it." Lord Thurlow, in allusion to the princes' dogged discredit of their father's recovery, is said to have exclaimed, "By ——! I suppose they wind up the king whenever I go to Kew, for he seems always well when I see him." "Pious children those!" writes M. Hubert to Lord Auckland. "That his [the king's] mind," writes the prince's friend, Lord Rawdon, on the 28th of February, "is at present tranquil, and clear upon ordinary subjects, is without dispute; but the suspicion is that there are certain strings which will, whenever they are touched, produce false music again." Even so late as the 30th of May we find the

prince admitting no more than that his father is "better." "The king," he writes on that day to Lord Cornwallis, "is convalescent ; that is to say, he certainly is better. Everything is thrown into the hands of the queen. Every friend that supported me and the common cause of succession in the family, if they had any place, have been dismissed, such as the Duke of Queensberry and our little friend Lothian. Queensberry has been dismissed, by order of the queen and Mr. Pitt, from the bedchamber. Lothian has left his regiment of horse guards." Lord Lothian, it will be remembered, was the nobleman whom the prince introduced into the king's darkened chamber at the time when his derangement was at its height. As for the Duke of Queensberry, Lord Sydney writes to Lord Cornwallis on the 21st of February : "They have driven old Queensberry out of England by calling him a rat for deserting his master to hobble after a young prince. At Calais his Grace was in doubt whether he should go to Brussels or venture to Paris, where he would have been as much abused as in London. I believe he has gone to Brussels. Lothian is a conspicuous figure among the deserters."

It was on the afternoon of the day on which the king received his sons, that he despatched the following interesting letter to Mr. Pitt. "Pitt," writes Wilberforce, on the 25th, "showed me the king's excellent letter."

The King to Mr. Pitt.

“KEW, Feb. 23, 1789.

“It is with infinite satisfaction that I renew my correspondence with Mr. Pitt by acquainting him with my having seen the Prince of Wales and my second son. Care was taken that the conversation should be general and cordial. They seemed perfectly satisfied. I chose the meeting should be in the queen’s apartment, that all parties might have that caution, which, at the present hour, could but be judicious.

“I desire Mr. Pitt will confer with the lord chancellor, that any steps which may be necessary for raising the annual supplies, or any measures that the interests of the nation may require, should not be unnecessarily delayed, for I feel the warmest gratitude for the support and anxiety shown by the nation at large during my tedious illness, which I should ill requite if I did not wish to prevent any further delay in those public measures which it may be necessary to bring forward this year ; though I must decline entering into a pressure of business, and, indeed, for the rest of my life, shall expect others to fulfil the duties of their employments, and only keep that superintending eye which can be affected without labour or fatigue.

“I am anxious to see Mr. Pitt any hour that may suit him to-morrow morning, as his constant

attachment to my interest and that of the public, which are inseparable, must ever place him in the most advantageous light. G. R."

Accordingly, on the following day, Mr. Pitt waited on his sovereign. On his return to London he told Mr. Grenville that the king appeared to be perfectly free from all disorder; that his manner was unusually composed and dignified, and that when he spoke of his illness it was as a thing that had passed, and which had left no other impression on his mind than gratitude to Heaven for his recovery, as well as to those who had stood by him in his calamity. While he spoke of the kindness he had experienced it was with tears in his eyes; yet, even when thus affected, added Mr. Pitt, there was not the slightest appearance of mental disease.

Not long afterward we find the king, in another letter to Mr. Pitt, reiterating the grateful sense which he entertained for "the warm and steady support he had met with during his severe and tedious illness." He had, indeed, reason to be grateful to his first minister. "In the midst of all these disquieting circumstances," writes Wilberforce, to the Rev. Christopher Wyvill, "my friend is every day matter of fresh and growing admiration. I wish you were as constantly as I am witness to that simple and earnest regard for the public welfare by which he is so uniformly

actuated. Great as I know is your attachment to him, you would love him more and more." "There certainly," writes Mr. Grenville, "never was in this country at any period such a situation as Mr. Pitt's."

Among those whom the king especially sent for, and thanked for the "affectionate fidelity with which they had adhered to him when so many others had deserted him," was his solicitor-general, Sir John Scott, afterward Lord Eldon. This visit was followed by one from the lord chief justice, Lord Kenyon, from whose diary on that day the following are extracts: "With the king at Kew by his command; I had a long private conference. He delivered me many of his private papers to take home and consider for him. Treated me most graciously." "Frederick only voted against us once — did he?" inquired the king; a distressing question which the chief justice did his best to parry. "Your Majesty," he replied, "must be aware to what trials one in his situation is exposed." "Very true," said the king, "very true."¹

¹ At a later period we find the Prince of Wales endeavouring, though to little purpose, to obtain from Lord Cornwallis an expression of approval of the Duke of York's political conduct during the king's illness, including, of course, an approval of the prince's own. "I must honestly confess," replies the earl on the 14th of August, 1790, "that, if I had been in England in the winter of 1788-89, I should have thought it my duty, however painful it might have been to me, to have taken a different line from his Royal Highness in Parliament."

Early in March the king was allowed to resume his card-parties with his equerries in the drawing-room at Kew, and on the 9th had an affecting interview with a nobleman for whom he entertained the truest affection and respect, George, Duke of Marlborough. The Archbishop of Canterbury incidentally mentions that the duke was with the king for half an hour, and that his Majesty presented him on the occasion with an astronomical watch. "The king," writes the duke to Lord Auckland, "sent for me to Kew the other day, and I found him just as I could wish as to health and spirits. He was very kind to me indeed. I fear I behaved like a fool twice whilst I was with him, but the account of his feelings, etc., moved me so much that I could not help it; and he took it very kindly, and was a good deal affected himself."

The following pleasing anecdote, connected with the recovery of George the Third, is from an autograph memorandum of the late Earl of Lonsdale. "Some months after the king's recovery from his first illness, Mr. — waited on his Majesty at Windsor to receive his commands on some matters connected with his office. In conversation, the discussions on the regency question were alluded to, and the king, having asked some questions, went on saying, 'To say the truth, I have never yet looked into the papers relating to it, as I could not do so till I found myself in a disposition to forgive all those who might have

acted in a manner I could not approve ; but I now feel myself prepared to examine them. I took the sacrament this day, and shall begin with the papers to-morrow morning.'” When, at the beginning of March, the king saw the Bishop of London, he told him that even when his illness was at the worst, his trust in God had never forsaken him, and that this confidence alone had been his support.

On the 10th of March, the day on which the king had the satisfaction of seeing his physicians take their departure from Kew, there was exhibited at night, in honour of his recovery, the most magnificent illumination that perhaps ever lighted up the capital of England and its beautiful environs. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who beheld the scene from the windows of Lambeth Palace, describes the illuminations as universal, and the streets as being as crowded as at midday. As far as his Grace could learn, the blaze of light extended even to Greenwich, Hampstead, and Brentford. “London,” writes Wraxall, “displayed a blaze of light from one extremity to the other ; the illuminations extending, without any metaphor, from Hampstead and Highgate to Clapham, and even as far as Tooting ; while the vast distance between Greenwich and Kensington presented the same dazzling appearance. The poorest mechanics contributed their proportion, and instances were exhibited of cobblers’ stalls

decorated with one or two farthing candles." "The nation," writes Lord Macaulay, "was wild with delight. On the evening of the day on which his Majesty resumed his functions, a spontaneous illumination, the most general that had ever been seen in England, brightened the whole vast space from Highgate to Tooting, and from Hammersmith to Greenwich."

"This day," writes Miss Burney from Kew, "was a day of happiness indeed." The queen, leaving the king almost alone with his lovely and beloved little child, the Princess Amelia, carried the elder princesses with her to witness the splendid spectacle of London in a blaze of light, but not till she had arranged a private illumination of the palace and of the courtyard of Kew, which she hoped would prove a gratifying surprise to her consort. Her amiable object was crowned with success. No sooner were the transparencies lighted up than the little Princess Amelia drew her father to the window of a front room, where, falling on her knees, she presented him with a copy of congratulatory verses, written, at the queen's request, by Miss Burney, concluding with the following postscript :

"The little bearer begs a kiss
From dear papa for bringing this."

"I need not, I think, tell you," writes the authoress of "Evelina," "that the little bearer begged not in

vain. The king was extremely pleased. He came into a room in which we had a party to look at the illuminations, and there he stayed above an hour, cheerful, composed, and gracious."¹ When, at two o'clock in the morning, the queen returned to Kew, to her great surprise she found the king standing at the porch to hand her from her carriage, and to thank her for the gratification which she had afforded him.² "The queen and princesses,"

¹ More than seventy-seven years have passed away (1866) since Kew Palace was illuminated in honour of George III.'s recovery, yet the venerable and accomplished scholar from whose obliging letters to the author the following passage is an extract still survives :

"Nec turpem senectam
Degere, nec citharâ carentem."

"I can well remember," he writes, "the illuminations on the king's announced recovery, and was present when the grand transparency by Biagio Rebecca was put up in the court facing the palace in the evening of the 10th of March, 1789, which was described in the *St. James's Chronicle* of the 17th of March of that year. In the lines at the bottom he was described as —

"The best of husbands, fathers, and of friends.'"

² The queen's visit to London, to witness the illuminations, was celebrated by Cowper in a copy of verses of no very extraordinary merit. The following, however, is a pleasing stanza :

"Glad she came that night to prove,
A witness undescried,
How much the object of her love
Was loved by all beside."

The queen, it seems, went in the first instance to Lord Bathurst's house in Piccadilly, now Apsley House, and afterward drove about the streets with the princesses in private carriages.

writes Hannah More, "came to see the illuminations, and did not get back to Kew till after one o'clock. When the coach stopped, the queen took notice of a fine gentleman who came to the coach door without a hat. This was the king, who came to hand her out. She scolded him for being up and out so late ; but he gallantly replied he could not possibly go to bed and sleep till he knew she was safe."

On the 13th of March the king was well enough to receive the congratulations of the *Corps Diplomatique* ; and the next day he quitted Kew for a few days' residence at Windsor. "All Windsor," writes Miss Burney, "came out to meet the king. It was a joy amounting to ecstasy. I could not keep my eyes dry all day long. A scene so reversed ! Sadness so sweetly exchanged for thankfulness and delight !" ¹

On the following day, Sunday, the king — ever strict in the performance of his religious duties — received the holy sacrament at the hands of his favourite prelate, Bishop Hurd. "On March the 15th," writes the bishop, "I administered the sacrament to his Majesty at Windsor in the chapel of the castle, as also on Easter Sunday, April 12,

¹ The king had previously gone to Windsor for an hour or two on the preceding Saturday. "The king," writes the Archbishop of Canterbury, "longed to go to Windsor, and went with the queen on Saturday ; was affected by the acclamations and joy of the people, but returned before six, comfortable, perfectly well, and happy at having been there."

and preached both days. At the sacrament of March 15th the king was attended by only three or four of his gentlemen. On Easter Sunday, the queen, princess royal, and Princesses Augusta and Elizabeth, with several lords and gentlemen and ladies of the court, attended the king to the chapel, and received the sacrament with him." Miss Burney writes on the 15th of March: "Bishop Hurd preached an excellent sermon, with one allusion to the king's recovery, delicately touched and quickly passed over."

Deeply grateful to the Almighty for the singular mercies which had been extended to him, the king resolved to celebrate his recovery by a public thanksgiving. Many who loved him feared that the excitement of the day might produce a return of his disorder, and therefore endeavoured, though in vain, to divert him from his pious purpose. Among these friendly counsellors was the Archbishop of Canterbury. "My lord," was the king's reply to him, "I have twice read over the evidence of the physicians on my case, and if I can stand that, I can stand anything." It was accordingly arranged that the affecting and imposing ceremony should take place on the 23d of April, on which day the king, accompanied to St. Paul's by the queen, the princesses, his brothers, the Dukes of Gloucester and Cumberland, and his sons, the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and Prince William, afterward Duke of Clarence, pro-

ceeded in solemn procession to St. Paul's Cathedral. A long and continuous line of splendid equipages contained the members of the House of Lords, the members of the House of Commons, the great officers of state, the judges, the masters in chancery, and others. Conspicuous above the rest were the king's state coach, drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, and the state coaches of the lord chancellor and the Speaker of the House of Commons. The densely crowded streets along which the procession passed were lined by the military, by the foot guards as far as Temple Bar, and by the artillery company and the city militia from Temple Bar to St. Paul's Cathedral. The spectacle, enhanced as was its effect by the ringing of church-bells, the roar of cannon from the Tower and St. James's Park, and the enthusiastic shouts of thousands of people, was grand as well as affecting in the extreme. At Temple Bar, the lord mayor, in his robe of crimson velvet, attended by the sheriffs and by the aldermen in their scarlet gowns, presented to him, with the ancient formalities, the sword of the city of London. On reaching St. Paul's, the surrounding area of which was patrolled by the horse guards, the king entered the great cathedral, walking between the Bishops of London and Lincoln; the Marquis of Stafford carrying before him the sword of state. At this moment, the voices of five thousand children, bursting into one grand chorus, produced

such an effect upon his nervous system as to oblige him to cover his face with his handkerchief. "I now," he said to the Bishop of Lincoln, "feel that I have been ill." He soon, however, recovered his self-possession, and, having taken his seat with the queen under a canopy of state near the altar, preserved — notwithstanding his consort and the princesses were sobbing near him — the most perfect composure throughout the ceremony. Opposite him, as the sons of peers, sat Fox and Fitzpatrick, and behind them Pitt. Nearer still to him sat the Prince of Wales and the princes of the blood, whose conduct during the imposing ceremony is described as having been in the highest degree irreverent, if not indecent.¹ Happily, their conduct would seem to have been unperceived by the king, since, on handing the queen into her carriage, he is represented as having been all smiles and apparent happiness.

¹ "I have the satisfaction to acquaint you," writes an accomplished contemporary, "that everything has gone off in the most perfect and satisfactory manner. The day as fine as ever shone from the heavens. The people all perfectly loyal to the king, and civil to Mr. Pitt. Indeed, the latter was applauded from all the windows as he came along, and very loudly as he walked up the church. The ceremony was very *imposant*, and the naval part was executed in an officer-like manner. I accompanied Lady Spencer and other ladies in the admiralty barge. We set out late, and reached the church early. Our seat was the best possible; very near the king and queen, and exactly opposite the row of princesses. From this situation I took a walk

If anything was wanting to complete the dissatisfaction felt by the heir to the throne at seeing his father the object of the blessings and prayers of so many thousands, it was the signal failure of one or two attempts made by his partisans to obtain a popular demonstration on his behalf along the line of procession, but which produced the contrary effect of eliciting still more enthusiastic acclamations in favour of the king. "The prince," writes Lord Bulkeley, "lost his temper in the city, and never recovered it afterward. At St. Paul's he was in the worst possible humour, and did everything he could do to expose himself, in the face of an amazing concourse of persons, and of all the foreign ministers." The prince, in fact, seems to have been almost as much out of favour with the public as his father was beloved. For instance, a play, which not only possessed considerable merit, but the principal characters of which were supported by Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble, was withdrawn from Drury Lane Theatre after a representation of only one night, for no other reason apparently than that it bore the obnoxious name of "The Regent."

to the body of the church, under the dome, where the arrangement, and consequently the sight, was very fine. At breaking up, we stood on the top of the great flight of steps, and saw the royal family, etc., take their departure. Ludgate Hill, as far as you could see, lined with soldiers, the area filled with horse, and every window, as well as the top of every house, crowded with people."

Two distinguished persons, who were afforded opportunities of conversing with the king at this time, were James Barry, the painter, to whom the king was sitting for his portrait, and Sir Sidney Smith, the hero of Acre. A few days after the thanksgiving in St. Paul's Cathedral, the king inquired of Barry whether he had had a good view of the procession, to which the artist replied that he had seen it to great advantage from a window on Ludgate Hill. "Then you were more fortunate than I was," remarked the king, "for I saw nothing but my horses' backs." "The king," writes Sir Sidney Smith to Lord Auckland, on the day after the thanksgiving, "looks thinner, and is three stone lighter than he was. You will say you had rather hear of his mind than his body, in answer to which I can assure you of the goodness of his memory and the composure of his manner, for I put myself in his way a few days ago at Windsor, and got near enough to be spoken to. He alluded to the intention I had expressed to go to Spain, when I took leave to go abroad two years ago, and was more accurate as to the exact month in which I returned than I could be at a moment's warning, for I mistook it, and he corrected me, remembering my having kissed hands on my arrival, before his illness, which he alluded to as the circumstance that made him remember my being at the levee on my return."

The queen and the nobility celebrated the king's

recovery with a series of balls and fêtes. The French ambassador gave a splendid entertainment at the embassy in Portland Place; the Spanish ambassador a still more magnificent one at Ranelagh. White's Club gave a fête at the Pantheon, the tickets for which cost three guineas and a half each; and even Brooks's was shamed into giving one at the Opera House. But though the king had recovered his reason, and the ladies had left off their regency caps and ribands, party feeling continued to run as high as ever in the fashionable world. The "ladies in opposition" refused to grace the fête at White's with their presence, while the "ladies who supported government" appear to have hesitated whether they should accept the tickets sent them from Brooks's. "The ladies," writes General Grant, a member of White's, to Lord Cornwallis, on the 18th of March, "are all to be dressed in white and gold. On the front of their caps they are to have a motto of 'God save the king' in gold letters. The prince and Duke of York were offered tickets, which they refused, but desired to subscribe. That was agreed to, but they are not to come. The opposition ladies follow the example and decline coming to the ball, but there probably will be some exceptions."

But most unseemly of all was the conduct of the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. The former not only endeavoured to dissuade his acquaintances to keep away from the entertainment

at White's, but both princes actually insulted the members of that club by sending their tickets to Hookam's library, in Bond Street, to be sold to any stranger that might think proper to purchase them. The Duke of York, it will be remembered, was to have been commander-in-chief in the event of the regency devolving upon his elder brother ; yet, notwithstanding he had so recently been named for this high appointment, we find him, on the night of the loyal entertainment at White's, inviting himself to a dance at the Horse Guards, given to some ladies of pleasure by certain officers of his father's household troops. "I have not authentically heard," writes Sir William Young to Lord Buckingham, "whether the Prince of Wales was of the party. The day will come when Englishmen will bring these princes to their senses."

It was at this period that the queen, actuated by her deep devotion for her consort and by her indignation at the ill-treatment which she imagined he had received, became for the first time in her life a partisan. Not only were the invitations to the parties at Buckingham House almost entirely confined to those who had "stood by the king" during his illness, but she wrote to the Prince of Wales that, though she would willingly receive him and his brother, the Duke of York, at her concert, she thought it but fair to tell them that the entertainment was intended for those who had supported their father "on the late occasion."

Moreover, at her first drawing-room she even went so far as to distinguish with smiles those who had remained stanch to her husband's government during his affliction, and to receive with cold looks those who had abandoned him in his "utmost need." Among the latter was the celebrated Doctor Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, who, in his autobiography, not only speaks with much bitterness of the reception he met with from the queen, but also, with much injustice, we believe, brings a charge against her Majesty of having been actuated at this period, not so much by conjugal affection as by political motives. As regards the queen's behaviour toward the bishop at her drawing-room, it certainly seems to admit of great, if not of entire, justification. For instance, at a time when the king's condition had been thought to be hopeless, and when the world was flocking to salute the rising sun, the bishop, desirous of being translated to the see of St. Asaph, vacant by the death of Doctor Shipley, had repaired to London,¹ and in a speech, certainly of no mean merit, distinguished himself as the only prelate in the House of Lords who spoke in favour of transferring the full powers of the afflicted king to his libertine son. True it was, that the bishop subsequently encouraged the clergy of his diocese to draw up addresses to the throne, in which her Majesty was described as a pattern of

¹ Bishop Shipley died on the 9th of December, 1788; Bishop Watson's speech was delivered on the 22d of January following.

“piety, amiableness, and purity, as a queen, a wife, and as a mother ;” but inasmuch as the king, at this time, had resumed his regal functions, we must accept the panegyric for as much as we may consider it worth. It should be mentioned that, on the occasion of the slight complained of by the bishop, the Prince of Wales, who was standing by the queen, went to the opposite extreme of accosting him in a marked and flattering manner, and of inviting him to dinner. The bishop, however, fairly intimated to the prince that Carlton House was at present not precisely the place where it would be prudent for him to dine, and consequently it was arranged that the entertainment should take place at the house of Sir Thomas Dundas. Another individual, who was treated with marked coldness by the queen on this occasion, was the Duke of Northumberland. “So, my lord,” he said to Bishop Watson, “you and I are also become traitors !”

Although little improvement, since the king’s illness, had taken place in the conduct of the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York toward their father, there had nevertheless been an interval since his recovery in which they had struggled hard, although to little purpose, to induce him to alter his opinion of their behaviour, and to reinstate them in his good graces. There is extant, for instance, a letter addressed by the prince to the king, so full of glowing protestations of filial love,

reverence, and duty, that, had one-half of his professions really emanated from the heart, and his statements been correct, no parent could have been more tenderly watched over than was George the Third by his sons, and consequently no sons could deserve better from a father. Speaking of the king's first alarming seizure, the prince writes : "I repaired immediately to Windsor, and, disregarding every other object, applied myself wholly to the care of a health so valuable, and to the alleviation of your Majesty's sufferings. Your Majesty stood, at that time, eminently in need of that care and vigilance which natural and strong affection knows alone how to render. I felt that the protection of a parent whom I have always loved, and whose heart I know has never been estranged from me, was become my peculiar duty. That duty I claimed and exercised as a precious, though melancholy, privilege, belonging to my birth, and conferred upon me by nature itself." Not only, continues the prince, had it been his unhappy fortune, at that time, to witness the sufferings of a beloved father, but there had fallen upon him a train of cares, trusts, and duties, for which he had had no preparation, but in the discharge of which he had happily been supported by the "constant, unwearied, and affectionate attendance and counsel" of his brother, the Duke of York. "I deem it most fortunate," proceeds the prince, "that I never was invested with the trust of conducting

the administration of public affairs in your Majesty's name;" and he adds, "In your Majesty's candid examination of my conduct I see the sure prospect of regaining the blessings of your love and approbation; and these I shall ever deem an ample compensation for all the disquietude which my enemies have hitherto succeeded in giving me."

But, energetic as is the language contained in this letter, a subsequent one, addressed by the prince to the king, is marked by almost stronger asseverations. "We," writes the prince, again speaking of the Duke of York, as well as of himself, "have ever found your Majesty personally kind and good to us. We most solemnly and seriously call God to witness that we have felt your goodness with gratitude, and repaid it with affection and reverence." These appeals, as has already been mentioned were made to little purpose; to which cause, apparently, we are to ascribe the renewed insults which we find offered by the prince to his father and mother.¹ From those insults even his innocent sisters were not exempted.² For instance, at one of the balls given on the king's

¹ Between the queen and the prince no reconciliation took place till March, 1791.

² "Under the mask of attention to their father and mother," writes Lord Bulkeley, "the prince and the Duke of York commit every possible outrage, and show every insult they can devise to them." At the great fête given by the French ambassador to celebrate the king's recovery, we find the princes declining to dance or stay supper, "lest they should have the appearance of paying the smallest attention to her Majesty."

recovery, he actually went so far as to glance contemptuously on the person of the Princess Royal, conveying the cruel insinuation that she was in the way of becoming a mother. Unhappily the foul insinuation was perceived by the princess, who afterward herself referred to it in conversation with Lady Harcourt. Lord Bulkeley, four days after the thanksgiving at St. Paul's, speaks of the king's mind being "torn to pieces by his sons ;" but it was the ingratitude of the Duke of York which naturally affected him most deeply. "It kills me," he one day exclaimed ; "it goes to my soul ; I know not how to bear it." Yet still, writes Lord Bulkeley, he "fondly and dotingly" loves him.

It was at this time that an incident occurred which was not only an interesting one to the royal family, but which produced a strong sensation in the public mind. On the 15th of May, on a field-day of the Coldstream Guards, Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Lennox¹ stepped up to the Duke of York on parade, and formally demanded from him an explanation of certain expressions disparaging to his character, which he had been informed had been uttered by his Royal Highness. The duke, being his commanding officer, very properly desired him to return to his post, reserving his reply in the meantime, till after the parade, when he sum-

¹ Nephew and heir presumptive to Charles, Duke of Richmond, whom he succeeded in 1806, as fourth duke.

moned Colonel Lennox, and the other officers of the regiment, to attend him in the orderly room. The words which he addressed to the former were few and explicit enough. He had no desire, he said, to derive protection either from his being a prince of the blood or as senior officer to Colonel Lennox. When off parade he wore a gray coat, and, as a private gentleman, was ready to give him satisfaction if he pleased. The result was a hostile encounter with pistols, on Wimbledon Common, at which Lord Rawdon, the intimate friend of the Prince of Wales, was second to the Duke of York, and the Earl of Winchelsea, a lord of the king's bedchamber, second to Colonel Lennox. The duke, who had determined on no account to discharge his own pistol, had a narrow escape from the fire of his adversary, whose ball grazed a curl at the side of his head. Lord Winchelsea now endeavoured to induce him to afford some explanation to Colonel Lennox, yet this he not only declined doing, but refused even to make the trifling concession that he believed his adversary to be a man of honour and courage. He had no animosity, he said, against Colonel Lennox. He had come there to give him the satisfaction he required. He had neither fired at, nor had he any intention to fire at him, although the colonel might repeat his own fire if he chose. This alternative, of course, was out of the question, and accordingly both parties quitted the ground.

This anecdote, not uninteresting in itself, is further curious as evincing the unfortunate extent to which party feeling prevailed, even within the walls of the palace. The facts that Lord Winchelsea, notwithstanding the active part which he had played in the late duel, was allowed to remain a lord of the bedchamber, and that Colonel Lennox was invited to a ball which was immediately afterward given by the queen, are indisputable. It has even been asserted that the queen received him on that occasion with marked attention. How far the king may have approved, or disapproved, of these exhibitions of partisanship on the part of his consort, there seem to be no means of ascertaining. This, however, we know, on the direct authority of the Prince of Wales, that not only was the king far from being displeased at the contempt of danger displayed by his favourite son, but that, when he "took him to his arms" on the day following the duel, he manifested "every token of tenderness and sensibility which his situation could draw from the best and most affectionate father." On the other hand, the queen, according to the prince, listened to the account of the narrow escape of her second son with calm indifference. "Your Majesty is my witness," writes the prince to his father, "that, during the whole relation, the queen did not utter a syllable either of alarm at the imminent danger which had threatened the life of my brother but an hour before, of joy and

satisfaction at his safety, or of general tenderness and affection toward him, which might appear natural in moments thus affecting." Evidently, the queen's indignation at the treatment which her consort had met with from her sons had almost got the better of her feelings as a mother.

CHAPTER X.

Judge Hardinge's Interview with the King — Royal Progress — The Court at Weymouth — Visits to Exeter, Saltram, and Plymouth — Return to Windsor — Death of the Duke of Cumberland — The Garter Offered to Pitt, but Declined — The Duke of Clarence's Diverting Conduct on the King's Birthday — Miss Burney's Account of Her Farewell to the Court — Suicide of James Sutherland — Marriage of the Duke of York — Reconciliation of the Queen and the Prince of Wales — The Prince's Debts — Coolness between Him and the Duke of York — Embarrassment of the Duke's Affairs.

THERE are no circumstances, as we have already remarked, under which George the Third figures in a more advantageous light, than when we meet with him in the society of the wise, the accomplished, and the good ; another example of which is afforded by the following graphic account from the pen of the accomplished Judge Hardinge,¹ solicitor-general to the queen, of an interview with which he was honoured by his sovereign at Windsor, a short time after his Majesty's happy recovery :

¹ George Hardinge, Esq., was the son of the accomplished Nicholas Hardinge, principal clerk of the House of Commons. He was born 22d of June, 1744, was educated at Eton and afterward at Trinity College, Cambridge, where Bishop Watson was

“I arrived at the Queen’s Lodge at twelve, and was carried to the equerries’ room. Colonel Digby came to me, civil and gentlemanlike. He chatted with me for half an hour, and, when he left me, said he would let the king know, through General Harcourt, I was there. In a few minutes I was gallanted up-stairs into Madame Schwollenberg’s dining apartment. There I found General Harcourt, who is a very agreeable man. He told me that when the king, who was going to the castle to receive the address of the clergy, should come out of his apartment, he would let him know, and receive his commands. In a quarter of an hour two royal coaches came to the door, and an equerry handed the queen into the first. The king followed her, without a thought, apparently, of poor me ; Princess Royal and Princess Augusta followed. This filled the first coach. Number two had Princess Elizabeth and a bedchamber woman. Then, afoot, my friends Digby and Harcourt.

“When they were flown, the porter came to me and said General Harcourt had named me to the king, but that his Majesty, being in a great hurry,

his tutor, and was subsequently called to the bar by the society of the Middle Temple. The interest of his uncle, Lord Camden, obtained for him the rank of sergeant at law ; in 1782 he was nominated solicitor-general to the queen ; in 1787 he was made a Welsh judge, and, two years afterward, attorney-general to her Majesty. He died, when on circuit, at Presteigne, in Radnorshire, 26th April, 1816, in the seventy-second year of his age.

had said nothing ; that, if I pleased, I might wait till his Majesty's return, which, the porter said, would be in an hour and a half. This, I thought, was as much as to say, If you go, you will not be missed. In half an hour Mrs. Schwellenberg's German footman came to lay the cloth, and produced the dining apparatus. For want of occupation I formed an acquaintance with him, and learnt that Madame Schwellenberg sat at the head of the table, the Misses Burney and Planta right and left of her, and any visitor at bottom. The room is pretty enough, and clean, but furnished with a cheap kind of paper and linen curtains. Observing a large piece of German bread, I fell to, and ate a pound of it. The hour and a half having expired, the regals returned, and then I heard the queen most condescendingly say, 'Do find out Mr. Hardinge, and beg him to come and see us.'

"Her butler out of livery came in to me, and desired me to follow him. I went through a very handsome apartment into another most beautifully fitted up, with a ceiling of the modern work, 'done,' as the king told me, in a week. Into this room I was shut, and found in it, standing by the fire, without any form, the king, queen, three princesses, and this bedchamber woman, whoever she was ; for I have not made her out, but liked her very much, because she seemed to like me. It is impossible for words to express the kind and companionable good humour of the whole party. I

almost forgot that any one of them was my superior. The king looked fifteen years younger, and much better in the face, though as red as ever. He said a number of excellent things, and in the most natural way. The queen, with amazing address and cleverness, gave a turn to the conversation, and mixed in it just at the right places. You will believe me when I tell you that I passed half an hour at least in the room.

“The princesses looked, as they always do, the pink of good humour. The Princess Royal had a very fine colour. The two others were pale. The king did a very odd thing by the Princess Royal, but I loved him for it. He said he would ask me, as a man of taste, what I thought of the ceiling; and then called upon the Princess Royal to explain the allegorical figures on the ceiling, which she did, — blushing a little at first in the sweetest manner, — with a distinct voice and great propriety in her emphasis. This one trait would of itself demonstrate how very kind they were. The king began by asking me how I could run away from London and give up my fees. I told him I never minded fees, but less when they interfered with my sense of duty to him. The queen then came up to me, and said, ‘You have less merit in the visit, because a little bird has told me that you are on your way to your circuit. This produced the topic of my circuit, and the king said that he understood Moysey to be a good man in domestic

life. He then went slap-dash into politics, queen and all. The king laughed heartily at the Rats by that name. 'They were the boldest Rats,' he said, 'he ever knew, for that all the calculation was against them. Even —— said it was probable I should recover. Not that I am recovered, according to some of them ; and yet I have read the last report of the physicians, which is a tolerably good proof that I am well. By the way, your uncle is considerably better, and I flatter myself that my getting well has done him good.' I then said that I had left him in some alarm how he was to wear the Windsor uniform, with a tie-wig over it, from the fear he should be mistaken for an old general who had fought at the battle of Dettingen. The queen said, 'Oh ! I plead guilty to that, and I see you enjoy it. I said, Hardinge will enjoy it ; for, though he is very good-natured, he loves a little innocent mischief.'

"The king then told me the whole story of the conference with Pitt ; commended the House of Commons, and said his illness had in the end been a perfect bliss to him, as proving to him how nobly the people would support him when he was confined. This tempted me to say that it was no political debate, but the contest between generous humanity and mean cruelty, and it interested human nature. The king seemed very much pleased with this idea, and worked upon it. I commended the conduct of the bishops, and it made them

laugh. Said the king, 'You mean to commend it as a wonder.' He talked over Lord North and the Duke of Portland. He talked of the chancellor, of Loughborough, and even Mr. Baron Hotham; said, 'You are almost the only man who loves the land for its own sake.' Then we talked of Mrs. Siddons, Jordan, etc., and the queen said, 'Siddons is going to Germany, to make the English find out by her absence that she was good for something.' Then we flew to Handel, after which the king made me a most gracious bow, and said, 'I am going to my dinner.' I was near the door, made a low bow to the females, and departed."

On the 25th of June, the king, by the advice of his physicians, set out from Windsor with the intention of passing the summer at Weymouth, and visiting the southwestern portion of his dominions. If, before his illness, his subjects in the rural districts had received him with extraordinary marks of loyalty and love, their congratulations, now that he had recovered, amounted to positive enthusiasm. From the day of his departure from Windsor, to the day of his return, his progress resembled a triumph. Arches of laurels and flowers, bands of music, and the acclamations and blessings of assembled thousands, greeted him in every town and village through which he passed. "Girls with chaplets," writes Miss Burney, who accompanied the queen, "beautiful young creatures, strewed the entrance of the various villages

with flowers." On the confines of the New Forest, a band of foresters, in their habits of green, presented him, according to ancient feudal custom, with a couple of milk-white greyhounds, wearing silver collars and led by silken cords. During the five days that he resided in the old hunting-lodge of the time of Charles the Second, at Lyndhurst, his guard consisted of bowmen and archers, in appropriate sylvan costumes. Pleasant excursions were made to the several spots of historical interest, or of rural beauty, in the neighbourhood. On the 27th, on his way to Boldrewood, then the seat of Lord Delawarr, he stood on the spot where the arrow of Sir Walter Tyrrell had pierced the heart of William Rufus; and in the evening, on Hordle Cliff, near Lymington, he gazed on the wide prospect by which it is surrounded. Everywhere the same rejoicings and congratulations awaited him. So rapturous, indeed, so artless and disinterested, were the evidences of the people's loyalty, that Miss Burney writes, "I assure you I cried twenty times in the day." Even in the small parish church of Lyndhurst, which the king devoutly attended with his family, the congregation was unable to repress its enthusiasm, and instead of a psalm, substituted "God Save the King." "Misplaced," writes Miss Burney, "as this was in a church, its intent was so kind, loyal, and affectionate, that I believe there was not a dry eye amongst either singers or hearers." The king, on

his part, seems to have missed no opportunity of doing good or of affording pleasure to others. Troublesome to him as must often have been the pressure of eager crowds, the discordance of indifferent bands of music, and the various addresses and felicitations of the civic authorities in the several towns which he visited, he nevertheless cheerfully and uncomplainingly put up with every inconvenience ; rewarded by the consideration that he was able to gratify his people, and happy so long as he saw those around him also happy. In every situation in which he found himself during his progress, — whether, on the Sabbath day, walking unostentatiously with the queen and her daughters to the nearest village church ; whether kneeling on the deck of one of his own ships-of-war, beneath a canopy of flags, with the binnacle serving both for altar and pulpit ; whether amusing himself with witnessing the bluejackets dancing their horn-pipes ; whether chatting with the mowers at Lyndhurst or the haymakers at Weymouth ; whether drenched to the skin with his daughters in a rough sea in an open boat in Portland Roads, or sailing, all smiles and happiness, amidst a fleet of pleasure-boats beneath the rich beauties of Mount Edgecumbe, — we find his conduct distinguished by a kindness, a good humour, and a condescension, of which it would be difficult to discover a more amiable example.

On the 30th of June the royal party quitted

Lyndhurst for Weymouth, where they arrived in the course of the evening.

The Princess Elizabeth to Madame —.

“WEYMOUTH, July 2, 1789.

“Je n'ai pas pû vous écrire avant aujourd'hui, ma chère madame : le tems ne l'a point permis. Je vous assure que j'aurai bien voulu vous écrire quelques lignes de Lyndhurst, mais pendant notre séjour là nous nous sommes très bien amusé par les différentes courses que nous avons faites. Je ne crois pas que j'ai été plus de trois quarts d'heure à la maison pendant toute la journée. Nous avons vu Southampton, Lymington, Boldrewood, Hordle Cliff. Dans notre chemin à Boldrewood, qui appartient à my Lord Delawarr, nous sommes passé un peu plus loin dans le forêt pour voir une pierre érigée par le père de my Lord Delawarr sur l'endroit où il a vu croître encore l'arbre qui a reçu l'arc qui a tué le Roi William II. Le modèle de cette pierre est fait d'un morceau de la racine de cet arbre.

“Vous ne vous pouvez imaginer la joie qu'on a montré partout où le roi a passé. Je vous assure que c'étoit presque trop ; partout on a chanté, ‘God Save the King.’ Je me suis bien amusé le jour que nous sommes arrivé à Lyndhurst, d'entendre dire à un pauvre homme, ‘I am so sorry we have no band for the king : it is so hard he has no music, as he loves it so much.’ Le jour après nous avons eu une trompette, dont l'harmonie

n'étoit pas des plus agréable. Deux jours après, un basson. J'ai vu une dame à Lyndhurst qui m'a dit que les gens de Southampton et des environs de Lyndhurst étoient les meilleurs créatures au monde ; qu'elle avoit elle-même à Lymington une maison où elle vivait plus de dix semaines sans jamais avoir la porte de sa maison fermée ni jour ni nuit, et qu'elle n'a pas même perdu une ruban. Adieu, ma chère madame. Croyez-moi toujours votre amie,

ELIZABETH."

At Weymouth, the king was received with public rejoicings and manifestations of affectionate loyalty much the same as had previously greeted him in other places. Triumphal arches were erected, royal salutes fired, and the town generally illuminated at night. Not only the wealthier classes of people, but the sailors, the labourers, the barge-men, and the children of the indigent, wore bands around their hats, with the words "God save the king ;" and even the bathing-women wore them around their waists. Trifling drawbacks, indeed, there seem to have been, such, for instance, as the king, on the occasion of his taking his first plunge into the sea, hearing the national anthem striking up close to him, and finding that a second bathing-machine, containing a band of music, had followed in his wake. Another untoward circumstance occurred at the ceremony of the mayor and burgesses of Weymouth kissing the queen's hand.

"You must kneel, sir," whispered the equerry in waiting, Colonel Gwynne, to the mayor, on his approaching her Majesty ; but instead of so doing, he took hold of the queen's hand, and carried it to his lips, with apparently much more of loyal frankness than courtly refinement. "You ought to have knelt, sir," repeated Colonel Gwynne, as the functionary repassed him ; to which the latter simply replied that "he could not." "Everybody else can kneel," retorted Colonel Gwynne. "Yes, sir," said the mayor ; "but I have, unfortunately, a wooden leg." The excuse of course admitted of no further argument ; but the worst of it was that the other burgesses, imagining that their leader had done "the correct thing," were unconsciously guilty of committing the same breach of etiquette. It was, however, after all, but an unlucky *contre-temps*, at which the good-natured monarch was probably the very first to laugh. "His Majesty," writes Miss Burney, "is in delightful and much improved spirits. All agree he never looked better." At Weymouth, indeed, — grateful to Heaven for his recovery from his fearful malady, and scarcely less grateful to his subjects for the proofs which they gave him of their attachment, — he seems to have thoroughly enjoyed himself. His custom was to rise at six o'clock, to walk on the Parade till eight, to breakfast at ten, to ride till three, and to sit down to dinner at four. On the Sunday evenings, the king, with the queen

and her daughters, usually frequented the public rooms, drinking tea in an inner apartment, but leaving the door wide open, so that the royal party could be seen by the company. Sometimes the king varied the occupations of the day by a visit to the *Magnificent* line-of-battle ship, or by a cruise in the *Southampton* frigate, both of which vessels lay off the town during his visit, or else made inland excursions to Lulworth Castle, Sherborne Castle, and other places of interest in the neighbourhood.

The king's sojourn by the seaside naturally attracted to the then small and quiet watering-place of Weymouth not only the ministers of state, but other persons celebrated in their day. Here Miss Burney for the first time beheld Mr. Pitt, of whom she formed the conception that his personal appearance, "neither noble nor expressive," was his least recommendation. It was on the Weymouth sands also that she accidentally encountered "a lady of a very majestic port and demeanour," and of "very uncommon beauty," whose "solemn salutation" she has recorded. It was no less a personage than Mrs. Siddons. The king ever took a pleasure in the theatre, and accordingly, under the superintendence of Lord Chesterfield, the great actress, although in indifferent health, was induced to appear on the stage as Rosalind, Lady Townly, and Mrs. Oakley; while the inimitable Quin charmed the royal party in

the "Irish Widow," the "Devil to Pay," and the "Commissary." Among other persons of note who waited on the king was Lord Eldon, at this time solicitor-general, who has bequeathed us the following anecdote connected with his visit. The king happening to express a hope to him that his advancement to the solicitor-generalship had been advantageous to him in a pecuniary point of view, "I told him," writes Lord Eldon, "what was strictly true, that in annual receipt I thought I must lose about two thousand pounds a year;" the future lord chancellor at the same time explaining to the king, that when engaged by attorneys in private cases they frequently left with him considerable fees of ten, fifteen, or twenty-five guineas; whereas, if consulted by the solicitors of public offices on questions of international law, the laws of revenue, or other grave matters, they usually presented him with only three guineas. "Oh!" said the king, "then for the first time I comprehend, what I never could before understand, why it has been so difficult to get any opinions from my law officers."

On the 13th of August the royal party quitted Weymouth for Exeter, where they arrived the same evening. Again the king's progress was an ovation. Again enthusiastic crowds, triumphal arches, flying colours, and bands playing "God Save the King," greeted him at the entrances of the different towns through which he passed. On

nearing the Charmouth Hills he good-naturedly alighted from his carriage, which he followed on foot, conversing familiarly with the delighted peasants, who had flocked thither to obtain a view of their sovereign. At Exeter all was joy and enthusiasm. "The crowds," writes Miss Burney, "the rejoicings, the hallooing, and singing, and garlanding, and decorating, of all the inhabitants of this old city, and of all the country through which we passed, made the journey quite charming." At night the city was brilliantly illuminated.

On the 15th the king proceeded through one of the most fertile districts in England, to Saltram, the seat of a minor, the Earl of Morley. "We passed," writes the authoress of "*Evelina*," "through such beautiful villages, and so animated a concourse of people, that the whole journey proved truly delectable. Arches of flowers were erected for the royal family to pass under at almost every town, with various loyal devices expressive of their satisfaction in this circuit. How happy must have been the king—how deservedly!" Saltram continued to be the king's headquarters till the 27th, during which interval he made many excursions to places of picturesque beauty or historical interest in the neighbourhood. At Plymouth, which he visited more than once, he was received, at the base of a triumphal arch of evergreens and flowers, by a civic procession, who conducted him into the city amidst the flying of

colours, the ringing of bells, and the roar of cannon. The ships-of-war in commission, the dock and victualling yards, and the military fortifications, were severally visited by him with real interest and gratification. On the 18th he was a spectator, from the deck of the *Southampton*, of a naval review of a squadron of seven sail of the line and a frigate. Visits were paid, on other days, to the famous beauties of Mount Edgecumbe, to the romantic woods and precipices of Maristow, on the banks of the Tamar, and to the fair scenery and antique curiosities of Cothele. On the 27th the court quitted Saltram for Weymouth, and on the 14th of September departed from Weymouth on its return homeward. The two succeeding days and nights were passed at Longleat, the seat of the Marquis of Bath, and the third night at Tottenham Park, the seat of the Earl of Ailesbury, at which place the bed in which their Majesties slept is said to have cost the noble owner of the mansion no less a sum than nine hundred pounds. On the 18th the king arrived at Windsor, where, after twelve weeks' absence, he was allowed the exquisite pleasure of again embracing the fair and engaging child whom he so tenderly loved. "I have the pleasure of acquainting you, my lord," writes Queen Charlotte to the Bishop of Worcester, "that his Majesty is, thank God, quite well; that our sea-excursions proved of great benefit to him; and that, in point

of bodily exercise, he is very careful. And, though hunting is not quite given over, yet do we readily stay at home when the clouds threaten us with storms. We have also had very good accounts of my son Augustus, who must by this time have arrived at Pisa. This tour is made for precaution, for his old complaint was greatly abated since last year, and he would himself rather have chosen to stay at home."

The following brief communication from the king announces the death of his brother, Henry Frederick, Duke of Cumberland, which event took place on the 18th of September, 1790, in the forty-fifth year of his age :

The King to the Duke of Orleans.

"À ST. JAMES, ce 23 Septembre, 1790.

"MON COUSIN : — Je n'ai pas voulu tarder de vous communiquer la triste nouvelle de la mort de mon très cher frère, le Prince Henri Frédéric, Duc de Cumberland, qu'il a plû au Tout Puissant de retirer à lui le 18 de ce mois, sur les cinq heures du matin, après une longue maladie ; et je ne doute nullement que vous ne preniez une part sincère et amicale à ce triste événement, comme de mon côté je m'intéresse à tout ce qui regarde la prospérité de votre maison ; étant avec l'estime et l'amitié les plus invariables,

" Mon cousin, votre bon cousin,

"GEORGE R."

Before the close of this year, the king, as will be seen by the letters which follow, testified how high was his sense of the services of Mr. Pitt, by making him an offer of the Order of the Garter, a compliment which, with the exception of Sir Robert Walpole, had never, we believe, been paid to an untitled commoner, since the days when Robert Dudley and Sir Christopher Hatton had knelt to be decorated by Queen Elizabeth. The honour, however, though coveted by the first dukes in the land, was respectfully but unhesitatingly declined by Mr. Pitt, as it afterward was in our own time when pressed by King William the Fourth upon Sir Robert Peel.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

“December 12, 1790.

“Having summoned a chapter of the Garter for Wednesday, and Mr. Pitt not having been at St. James’s in the course of the last week, I think it necessary by this means to remind him of my having offered him one of the vacancies of that Order. When last I mentioned it, he seemed to decline; but perhaps the conclusion of the dispute with Spain may make him see it in a different light, namely, as a public testimonial of my approbation.”

The King to Mr. Pitt.

“December 13, 1790.

“I have just received Mr. Pitt’s letter declining my offer of one of the vacant Garters, but in so

handsome a manner that I cannot help expressing my sensibility."

It will be seen that, at a mere wish expressed by Mr. Pitt, the king conferred the rejected Garter upon his brother, the Earl of Chatham.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

"December 14, 1790.

"Mr. Pitt's note is just arrived, intimating a wish that I should confer the third vacant Garter on his brother, Lord Chatham.¹ I trust he is too well convinced of my sentiments to doubt that I shall with pleasure to-morrow give this public testimony of approbation, which will be understood as meant to the whole family."

In the absence of any stirring or very interesting events in the king's history at this period, the reader may not be unentertained by the following court scene which Miss Burney describes as having taken place at St. James's Palace on the occasion of the king's birthday, the 4th of June, 1791. The scene lay, after dinner, in the apartment of Madame Schwellenberg, the dreaded "Cerbera" of Miss Burney's "Memoirs;" the principal actors being the future King, William the Fourth, — recently promoted to be a rear-admiral, — the correct and re-

¹ The two other vacant Garters were conferred upon Ernest, Duke of Saxe-Gotha, and Francis, Duke of Leeds.

spectable Miss Goldsworthy, Miss Burney, Mr. Stanhope,¹ one of the queen's equerries, and Mr. De Luc, a gentleman of eminent scientific attainments, and an especial favourite of the king and queen. The prince, as will be seen, was unmistakably in a state which Miss Burney describes as showing him "in genuine colours a royal sailor," but which his professional friends would probably have designated "half seas over."

While they were still eating fruit, the Duke of Clarence entered. He had just risen from the king's table, and was waiting for his equipage to take him home to prepare for the ball. "We all," writes Miss Burney, "rose, of course, upon his entrance, and the two gentlemen placed themselves behind their chairs, while the footmen left the room. But he ordered us all to sit down, and called the men back, to hand about some wine. He was in exceeding high spirits, and in the utmost good humour. He placed himself at the head of the table, next Mrs. Schwellenberg, and looked remarkably well, gay, and full of sport and mischief; yet clever withal, as well as comical. 'Well, this is the first day,' he said, 'I have ever dined with the king at St. James's on his birthday.

¹ Edwin Francis Stanhope, a scion of the Chesterfield branch of the house of Stanhope. He married Lady Catherine Brydges, daughter and co-heir of John Brydges, Marquis of Carnarvon, son of James, first Duke of Chandos. Mr. Stanhope, who had formerly been gentleman usher of the privy chamber to Queen Charlotte, died in 1802.

Pray, have you all drunk his Majesty's health?' 'No, your Royal Highness; your Royal Highness might make dem do dat,' said Mrs. Schwellenberg. 'Oh, by ——, will I! Here, you,' to the footman, 'bring champagne! I'll drink the king's health again, if I die for it! Yet I have done pretty well already; so has the king, I promise you! I believe his Majesty was never taken such good care of before. We have kept his spirits up, I promise you! We have enabled him to go through his fatigues, and I should have done more still but for the ball and Mary. I have promised to dance with Mary.'¹

"Champagne was now brought for the duke; he ordered it all around. When it came to me, I whispered Westerhaults to carry it on. The duke slapped his hand violently on the table, and called out, 'Oh, by ——, you shall drink it!' There was no resisting this. We all stood up, and the duke sonorously gave the royal toast. 'And now,' cried he, making us all sit down again, 'where are my rascals of servants? I sha'n't be in time for the ball; besides, I have got a deuced tailor waiting to fix on my epaulette. Here, you! go and see for my servants! D'ye hear? Scamper off!' Off ran William. 'Come, let's have the king's health

¹ The Princess Mary, afterward Duchess of Gloucester, was to dance her first minuet in public at the court ball in the evening. Miss Burney mentions her looking "most interesting and unaffectedly lovely," and anticipating the event with "a delight and alarm nearly equal."

again! De Luc, drink it! Here! champagne to De Luc!’ I wish you could have seen Mr. De Luc’s mixed simper,—half pleased, half alarmed. However, the wine came, and he drank it; the duke taking a bumper for himself at the same time. ‘Poor Stanhope!’ cried he; ‘Stanhope shall have a glass too. Here! champagne! What are you all about? Why don’t you give champagne to poor Stanhope?’ Mr. Stanhope with great pleasure complied, and the duke again accompanied him. ‘Come hither! do you hear?’ cried the duke to the servants; and on the approach, slow and submissive, of Mrs. Stainforth’s man, he hit him a violent slap on the back, calling out, ‘Hang you! why don’t you see for my rascals?’ Away flew the man; and then he called out to Westerhaults, ‘Hark’ee! bring another glass of champagne to Mr. De Luc!’ Mr. De Luc knows these royal youths too well to venture at so vain an experiment as disputing with them, so he only shrugged his shoulders and drank the wine. The duke did the same.

“‘And now, poor Stanhope!’ cried the duke; ‘give another glass to poor Stanhope! D’ye hear?’ ‘Is not your Royal Highness afraid?’ cried Mr. Stanhope, displaying the full circle of his borrowed teeth. ‘I shall be apt to be rather up in the world, as the folks say, if I tope on at this rate.’ ‘Not at all; you can’t get drunk in a better cause. I’d get drunk myself, if it was not for the ball. Here, champagne! another glass for

the philosopher! I keep sober for Mary.' 'Oh, your Royal Highness!' cried Mr. De Luc, gaining courage as he drank, 'you will make me quite droll if you make me go on — quite droll!' 'So much the better! so much the better! it will do you a monstrous deal of good! Here! another glass of champagne to the queen's philosopher!'" Even the dreaded "Cerbera" herself had a narrow escape from becoming a victim to the prince's boisterous spirits. "Mrs. Schwellenberg," writes Miss Burney, "who had sat laughing and happy all this time, now grew alarmed, and said, 'Your Royal Highness, I am afraid, will be late for the ball.' 'Hold your potato-jaw, my dear!' cried the duke, patting her. But, recollecting himself, he took her hand and pretty abruptly kissed it; and then, flinging it hastily away, laughed aloud, and called out, 'There! that will make amends for anything; so now I may say what I will. So, here! a glass of champagne for the queen's philosopher and the queen's gentleman-usher! Hang me! if it will not do them a monstrous deal of good!'" Thus the light-hearted sailor continued to rattle on till his carriage was announced, when he took his departure, apparently almost as abruptly as he had made his appearance. When, on the next occasion of Miss Burney meeting the Princess Mary, she sought to amuse her by detailing the foregoing scene, she found that she had been anticipated by the duke

himself. "Oh!" said the princess, "he told me of it himself the next morning, and said, 'You may think how far I was gone, for I kissed the Schwellenberg's hand.'" The Schwellenberg, however, would seem to have been rather pleased with the liberty than otherwise. "Dat Prince William," she said, good-humouredly, to Miss Burney, "him really ver merry; oders vat you call tipsy."

It was only a very few days after the scene in Madame Schwellenberg's apartment, that Miss Burney took an affecting leave of the queen at Buckingham House, on quitting her service for ever. The queen, she writes, "had her handkerchief in her hand or at her eyes the whole time;" while Miss Burney, on her part, describes herself as having been so overwhelmed by the kindness and condescension of her royal mistress, that, on quitting the royal presence, she "nearly sobbed." Although the king and queen were on the point of entering their carriage on their departure for Kew, the kind-hearted and considerate king found time to seek the apartments of the queen, for the purpose of offering his good wishes to one who, for five years, had been her constant, and, in some respects, her confidential attendant. "The king," writes Miss Burney, "came into the room. He immediately advanced to the window, where I stood, to speak to me. I was not able to comport myself steadily; I was forced to turn my head

away from him. He stood still and silent for some minutes, waiting to see if I should turn about. But I could not recover myself sufficiently to face him, strange as it was to do otherwise, and, perceiving me quite overcome, he walked away and I saw him no more. His kindness, his goodness, his benignity, never shall I forget : never think of but with fresh gratitude and reverential affection."

From the warm-hearted and unaffected daughters of George the Third, Miss Burney, during the whole time that she had resided under the royal roof, had ever experienced the most graceful and even affectionate attentions. Accordingly, the parting with them brought fresh tears to her eyes. "I took," she writes, "for the last time, the cloak of the queen, and, putting it over her shoulders, slightly ventured to press them, earnestly, though in a low voice, saying, 'God Almighty bless your Majesty!' She turned around, and putting her hand upon my ungloved arm, pressed it with the greatest kindness, and said, 'May you be happy!' She left me overwhelmed with tender gratitude. The three eldest princesses were in the next room. They ran in to me the moment the queen went onward. Princess Augusta and Princess Elizabeth each took a hand, and the Princess Royal put hers over them. I could speak to none of them, but they repeated, 'I wish you happy! I wish you health!' again and again with the

sweetest eagerness. They then set off for Kew."¹

It was not much more than a month after this time that the king was unfortunately a spectator of a painfully tragic scene, which is said to have affected him deeply. A gentleman of the name of Sutherland, who had recently held the appointment of judge-advocate of Minorca, had been engaged in a lawsuit with General Murray, the governor of the island, in which the latter had been defeated. The general, however, had sufficient influence to procure the suspension of his subordinate from his official duties, who accordingly returned to England, where he repeatedly, but in vain, appealed to the proper department of the state for redress for his grievances, whether those grievances were real or imaginary. Maddened, at length, by the sickness of hope deferred, and with penury staring him in the face, the unfortunate gentleman stationed himself, with a pistol concealed on his person, against the railings which separate the Green Park from St. James's Park, where a large crowd of people had assembled to see the king pass on his way to St. James's Palace. Waiting till the royal equipage had arrived nearly opposite to the spot on which he was

¹ "All the sweet princesses," writes Miss Burney to her father on the 3d of July, "seem sorry I am going. And the king, the benevolent king—so uniformly, partially, and encouragingly good to me—I can hardly look at with dry eyes."

standing, he affixed to the railings a paper addressed to the king, and then, pointing the pistol at his own breast, discharged it, and instantly fell. The king ordered that every care should be taken of him, and, on being informed that he had already expired, exclaimed, "May Heaven forgive him!" Although the poor suicide was decently, and even well dressed, in a suit of black, there were found about his person only a few pence and a letter inscribed, "To the coroner who shall take an inquest on James Sutherland."

On the 3d of the following month, the king set out from Windsor with his family on a second visit to Weymouth, during his stay at which place he is said to have principally occupied himself in investigating the relative systems under which the Wiltshire and Dorsetshire farmers managed their lands. Here the court remained till the 1st of October, when its return to London was hurried by the near approach of the marriage of the Duke of York with the Princess Frederica Charlotte Ulrica Catherina, eldest daughter of Frederick William the Second, King of Prussia, by a daughter of the house of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel. The marriage, it is said, was one of affection. They were united, in the first instance, at Berlin, on the 29th of September, and subsequently remarried, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the queen's drawing-room at Buckingham House, in the presence of all the royal family.

The King to the Duke of Orleans.

“À ST. JAMES, ce 12 Octobre, 1791.

“MON COUSIN : — Je m’empresse de vous faire part de l’heureuse célébration du mariage entre mon très cher fils, le Duc d’York, et ma cousine, la Princesse Royale de Prusse, qui s’est faite à Berlin, le 29 du mois passé ; et je me persuade que vous apprendrez avec une vraie satisfaction la nouvelle d’un événement qui me touche de si près. Je saisis avec plaisir cette nouvelle occasion de vous réitérer tous les sentiments de l’amitié sincère avec laquelle je suis,

“ Mon cousin, votre bon cousin,

“GEORGE R.

“À mon Cousin, le Duc d’Orleans.”

The new Duchess of York was formed to confer happiness on a husband. “I believe and hope,” writes Lord Malmesbury from Coblenz to the Duke of Portland, “she will make him happy, and please in England. She is far from handsome, but lively, sensible, and very tractable ; and if one-tenth part of the attachment they now show for each other remains, it will be very sufficient to make an excellent ménage.” The duke, much to his credit, deputed to the queen the privilege, and with it the responsibility, of selecting the ladies of his wife’s household. “Besides the good effect of such an attention,” writes Lord Malmesbury,

“it will relieve the duke from the embarrassment of applications, and particularly such as might be suggested to the prince to make him, which it would be difficult for him to refuse, and, from the complexion of the prince’s society, it might be by no means advisable for him to grant.”

In the month of March, 1791, the Prince of Wales, as has been already intimated, had been happily reconciled to his mother. “A gentleman,¹ who lives at the east end of St. James’s Park,” writes Walpole, on the 27th of March, “has been sent for by a lady,² who has a large house at the west end, and they have kissed and are friends, which he notified by toasting her health in a bumper at a club the other day. I know no circumstances, but am glad of it.” It seems, however, to have been fated that the prince should for no length of time continue on good terms with those who would only too willingly have welcomed him back to their affections. How matters stood in this respect is best explained by an account which Lord Malmesbury has bequeathed us, of three or four private interviews which he had with the prince in the month of June of the following year, at which the state of his Royal Highness’s domestic affairs was the principal topic discussed. Of the Duke and Duchess of York the prince spoke “coldly and unaffectionately,” and of the Duke of Clarence in a very slighting manner. As

¹ The Prince of Wales.

² The queen.

for himself, he said, he stood higher than ever in the good graces of the queen, but was on less satisfactory terms with the king than he had been some months previously. The reason seems to be obvious. Notwithstanding the prince's former promises of amendment, he had persisted in his career of ruinous extravagance, and accordingly his pecuniary liabilities had again increased to an enormous sum. By his own account, his racing-stud alone cost him thirty thousand a year. In a state of great nervousness and agitation, he intimated to Lord Malmesbury that he had had several executions in his house; that his debts amounted to three hundred and seventy thousand pounds, and that, unless the king consented to relieve him, it would be absolutely necessary for him to go abroad, and live on the income of a private gentleman. As regarded the prince's altered language in speaking of the Duke of York, the occasion of it was explained to Lord Malmesbury, a few days afterward, by the prince's groom of the bedchamber, Colonel St. Leger. "He called on me," writes Lord Malmesbury, "on the 8th of June. He said the prince was more attached to Mrs. Fitzherbert than ever; that he had been living with Mrs. Crouch;¹ that she,

¹ A handsome actress, on whom the Prince of Wales is said to have squandered large sums, and to have settled on her an annuity of £1,200 a year, the payment of which he subsequently disputed.

Mrs. Fitzherbert, piqued him by treating this with ridicule, and coquetted on her side. This hurt his vanity and brought him back, and he is now more under her influence than ever. She dislikes the Duchess of York, because the duchess will not treat her *en belle sœur*. It is that, that is the cause of the coolness between the two brothers." The duke's affairs at this time were almost in as bad a state as those of his elder brother. The duke had returned to England, said Colonel St. Leger, with the highest reputation, and might have done what he pleased with the king, who doted on him, but unfortunately he had resumed several of his old habits, — played at Brooks's, and frequented Newmarket, where he was in the habit of losing his money, and neglected St. James's. He behaved, however, said Lord Malmesbury's informant, "vastly well to the duchess, and was happy." This account was afterward confirmed to Lord Malmesbury by the colonel's elder brother, Anthony St. Leger. Mrs. Fitzherbert, he said, was the occasion of the misunderstanding between the royal brothers, and he blamed her excessively. It may be mentioned that the Duke of York told Lord Malmesbury at this time that he "stood very well at St. James's."

CHAPTER XI.

Death of Lord Bute — Blindness and Death of Lord North — Blindness and Death of Colonel Barré — Pitt Appointed Warden of the Cinque Ports — Thurlow Dismissed from the Lord Chancellorship — Pitt's Eminent Services — His Splendid Speech on the Slave Trade — French Revolution — Effect of French Revolutionary Doctrines in England — Dissolution of the Friendship Between Fox and Burke.

ON the 10th of March, 1792, died, at the age of seventy-nine, the once powerful minister and envied courtier, John, Earl of Bute. The neglect which, for nearly the third of a century, he had encountered from the world, presents, when contrasted with his former brilliant and coveted position, a sad and humiliating instance of the vanity of human greatness. To his old friend Home, the author of "Douglas," we find him writing on the 25th of March, 1773: "Think, my friend, of my son Charles being refused everything I asked! I have not had interest to get him a company, while every alderman of a petty corporation meets with certain success. I am now in treaty, under Lord Townshend's wing, for dragoons in Ireland. If I don't succeed, I will certainly offer him to the

Emperor.”¹ Yet it was not very long before the date of this letter that Lord Chatham, in the House of Lords, had denounced the fallen and powerless favourite as one “behind the throne greater than the throne itself.” During the last quarter of a century of Lord Bute’s life, he appears to have principally resided, in almost complete retirement, in a marine villa which he had erected on the edge of the cliff at Christchurch, in Hampshire, overlooking the Needles and the Isle of Wight. “Here,” we are told, “his principal delight was to listen to the melancholy roar of the sea, of which the plaintive sounds were probably congenial to a spirit soured with what he believed to be the ingratitude of mankind.”

“ . . . populi contemnere voces

Sic solitus : Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo

Ipsæ domi.”

— *Horat. Sat. I. lib. I.*

On the 5th of August, 1792, died, at the age of sixty, another of the king’s former ministers and friends, Frederick, Lord North, who, two years previously, had succeeded his venerable father as third Earl of Guildford. Whatever may have been the errors of Lord North’s political career, too much praise can scarcely be accorded to those social qualities and private virtues, to which, at an

¹The son referred to by Lord Bute was the late Lieutenant General Sir Charles Stuart, K. B. He died March 26, 1801, in his forty-ninth year. He was the father of Charles, created Baron Stuart de Rothesay in 1828.

earlier stage of this work, we have attempted to do justice. His political opponent, Burke, has perpetuated the "infinite wit and pleasantry, the delightful temper, and most disinterested mind" of this most agreeable of companions and most amiable of men. He was by nature and education a person of no mean conversational powers. Those powers had been enhanced and rendered delightful by the advantages of an education at Eton, and afterward at the Universities of Oxford and Leipsic; by protracted travel through the various countries of Europe; by having been all his lifetime a man of the world; by his classical tastes and fondness for literature; by his thorough knowledge of human nature, as well as from the graver anecdotes and facts with which, from his having filled the post of prime minister during one of the most stirring decades in English history, he was enabled to embellish his conversation. To these accomplishments and advantages may be added a happy art of accommodating his conversation to every society in which he found himself; a temperament utterly devoid of irascibility a thorough appreciation and almost childlike love of the ridiculous; an ever ready, playful, and genial wit; an utter absence of all pride and ostentation; powers of raillery which he never suffered to wound the feelings of others; and, lastly, a freshness of feeling, a good humour, and a sweetness of temper, which not even the prosings of the tiresome, nor the flip-

pancies of the pert could ever ruffle. Generous, open-hearted, and hospitable, beloved by his personal friends and idolised in his domestic circle, delighting in the society of the young, and never so happy as when sharing the fun and frolics of his children, diffusing gaiety and happiness on all around him, it would be difficult to discover a companion more fascinating, or an individual more deserving of affection, than the well-meaning statesman to whose short-sighted policy are mainly attributable the bloodshed, the waste of treasure, the blunders, miseries, and humiliation, which were entailed upon Great Britain by her miserable contest with her North American colonies.

Early in the year 1787 a palsy of the optic nerves had afflicted Lord North with partial, and threatened him with total, deprivation of sight. On its being announced that his recovery was impossible, the king—doubtless little anticipating that the same terrible infliction was in store for himself—is said to have expressed the deepest commiseration at the sad condition of one whom he had formerly loved so well, and in whom he had so entirely confided. On the monarch, however, the visitation of heaven subsequently fell far more heavily than it had fallen upon his minister. Unhappily for George the Third, his closing years were destined to be harrowed by calamities heavier even than blindness; while to Lord North was fortunately allotted a serene and painless decline

of the vital powers, cheered by the tender attention of the affectionate wife and gifted daughters of whom he was the idol. On the 10th of April, 1787, Storer writes to Lord Auckland that their afflicted friend is "all but blind," being unable to discover the colour of one wine from that of another. Still more melancholy are the accounts which Lord Sheffield writes on the 10th of the following month. "He has no hopes," writes his lordship; "he says he has no expectations but of darkness. He held up his hand and said he could not see it. He was, however, pleasant, and with his usual ability took up the subjects of the day. I was made the more miserable, as I expected to find him better. There is some consolation in his not being able to see the melancholy aspects of his family around him." His charming daughter, the late Lady Charlotte Lindsay, has borne touching testimony to the patience and cheerfulness with which Lord North endured his grievous and almost sudden calamity. Being of a nervous temperament, he was occasionally subject to depression of spirits, yet, when in the society of others, not even the most watchful of those who loved him could discover traces of dejection or irritability. Two persons — Richard Cumberland, the dramatic writer, and Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, who were severally much in the society of Lord North toward the close of his life — have corroborated the testimony of Lady Charlotte. "When I call

to mind," writes Cumberland, "the hours I passed with Lord North in the darkness of his latter days, there was such a charm in his genius, such a claim upon my pity in the contemplation of his sufferings, that I could not help saying within myself, 'The minister, indeed, has wronged me, but the man atones.' His house at Tunbridge Wells was in the grove. One day he took my arm and asked me to conduct him to the Parade upon the Pan-tiles. 'I have a general recollection of the way,' he said; 'and if you will make me understand the posts upon the footpath, and the steps about the chapel, I shall remember them in future.' 'I could not lead blind Gloster to the cliff.'¹ I executed my affecting trust, and brought him safely to his family. The ministering and mild daughter of Tiresias received her father from my hands."

Another eminent political contemporary, whose closing days were darkened by blindness, was Lord North's former and most bitter public adversary, Colonel Barré. That stern and remarkable man, whose fierce and powerful eloquence and acknowledged intellectual powers had once rendered him so formidable, was now as helpless

¹ "*Gloster*. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks fearfully in the confined deep:
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear
With something rich about me: from that place
I shall no leading need."

— *King Lear*, Act iv. Sc. 2.

as the good-humoured minister whom he had so often and so ruthlessly attacked. He is also said to have borne his affliction with a no less graceful and cheerful resignation. When, on one occasion, they encountered one another, each led by an attendant, on the Pantiles at Tunbridge Wells, Colonel Barré, after some compliments had passed between them, happened to make some allusion to the political conflicts of the past. "Ah, colonel," gaily observed Lord North, "whatever may have been our former animosities, I am persuaded there are no two men who would now be more glad to see each other than you and I." Neither of them lived long after this interview, and they died within little more than a fortnight of each other.¹

In the year 1792, the bodily health of Lord North began visibly to decline. Symptoms of dropsy manifested themselves; his appetite failed him; sleepless nights followed, and the depression of his spirits grew apparently more frequent and more distressing. It was in this condition, after having passed a painfully restless night, that he adjured his friend and physician, Doctor Warren, to acquaint him with his real state. Thus appealed to, Warren felt it his duty to intimate to him that water had formed on his chest, and that his days, if not his hours, were numbered. To the sentence of death, thus pronounced on him, he listened with

¹ Colonel Barré died on the 20th of July, 1792; Lord North on the 5th of August.

the calmest composure. "He knew it," writes Lord Sheffield to Lord Auckland, "and he continued calm and amiable to the last, and said he was thankful that he had a little time to settle his affairs, and to comfort those about him." Desirous of dying at peace with all the world, he sent to request the attendance in his sick-chamber of two persons, Lord Auckland and Mr. John Robinson, by whose political abandonment of him he had formerly been much pained and offended, but with whom he now shook hands, and parted in a manner which afforded him complete satisfaction. "I saw him," writes Storer to Lord Auckland, "and conversed with him last Thursday night, *i. e.* preceding his death, and the last words which he said to me were, 'God bless you!' uttered in such a tone as if he never expected to see me again. The benediction still sounds in my ears. One's heart must have been of steel not to have been touched with his situation." From the moment that Lord North was informed that his case was hopeless, his constitutional serenity never deserted him. The depression of his spirits never returned. Cheered by the tender attentions of the beloved beings who surrounded him, he took a pleasure, to the last, in listening to his favourite passages in Shakespeare's plays, which were read to him by his eldest and accomplished daughter, Lady Glenbervie. He continued also to take the same interest as formerly in important passing political events. One

of the latest sentiments which he breathed was an expression of gratitude at the prospect of his dying before the breaking out of the horrors which he foretold would be the result of the French Revolution. "I am going," he said, "and thankful I am that I shall not witness the anarchy and bloodshed which will soon overwhelm that unhappy country." Lord North expired on the 5th of August, 1792, at the age of sixty. However remiss he may have been in observing the outward formalities of religion, we learn that at heart he had ever been a sincere and pious Christian.

The death of Lord North placed at the king's disposal the honourable appointment of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, a sinecure, tenable for life, and to which was attached a salary of £3,000 a year. The king, contemplating the possibility of his own decease, had long been anxious to make a suitable provision for a public servant who had served him so well and faithfully as Mr. Pitt had done, and accordingly, as will be seen by the following notes, he not only made him an immediate offer of the vacant appointment, but was determined not to receive a refusal.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

(Extract.)

"Aug. 6, 1792.

"Having this morning received the account of the death of the Earl of Guildford, I take the first

opportunity of acquainting Mr. Pitt that the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports is an office for which I will not receive any recommendations, having positively resolved to confer it on him as a mark of that regard which his eminent services have deserved from me. I am so bent on this, that I shall be seriously offended at any attempt to decline. I have intimated these my intentions to the Earl of Chatham, Lord Grenville, and Mr. Dundas."

The King to Mr. Dundas.

"WINDSOR, Aug. 6, 1792, ^m₃₅ p^t 7 A.M.

"The enclosed is my letter to Mr. Pitt, acquainting him with my having fixed on him for the office of Warden of the Cinque Ports. Mr. Dundas is to forward it to the West,¹ and to accompany it with a few lines, expressing that I will not admit of this favour being denied. I desire Lord Chatham may also write, and that Mr. Dundas will take the first opportunity of acquainting Lord Grenville of the step I have taken.

G. R.

"Mr. Pinckney may have his audience on Wednesday."

This flattering kindness on the part of the king could scarcely have failed to be highly gratifying to Mr. Pitt, who at once accepted the boon at the

¹ Mr. Pitt was at this time on a visit to his mother, Lady Chatham, at Burton-Pynsent, in Somersetshire.

hands of his sovereign. To his friend Rose he writes from Burton-Pynsent on the 7th: "I have had a letter from the king making the offer in the handsomest way possible, and have accepted." To Lady Chatham also he writes a few days afterward from General Harcourt's seat, St. Leonard's Hill, near Windsor: "I arrived here yesterday after a very pleasant journey, but, from the heat of the weather, too late to pay my duty at Windsor before dinner, as I had intended. I had an opportunity, however, of doing so on the Terrace in the evening, and of receiving a personal confirmation of every gracious sentiment which had been so fully expressed already."¹

It was in the summer of this year that, at the instigation of Mr. Pitt, the king was reluctantly induced to dispense with the services of his surly old favourite, Lord Chancellor Thurlow. Pitt and Thurlow had never loved one another. There had been times, indeed, when they had occasionally met in the same convivial society, — in those jovial after-dinner times, for instance, when they were fired at by the Tooting turnpike-keeper for galloping through his toll without paying, and when, at

¹ "Immediately upon Lord Guildford's death," writes Pitt to his friend Wilberforce, on the 8th of August, "the king has written to me in the most generous terms, to say that he cannot let the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports go to any one except myself. Under all the present circumstances, and in the manner in which the offer came, I have no hesitation in accepting it, and I believe you will think I have done right."

Dundas's hospitable villa at Wimbledon, their host used to ply the chancellor with his "best Burgundy and blasphemy, to put him in good humour." Even in those early days, however, we find Pitt denouncing the chancellor as "a growler at everything, a proposer of nothing, and a supporter of everything." Thurlow, in fact, had not only disgusted the members of every administration to which he had belonged, by his waywardness, his overbearing manners, and his domineering assumption of superiority, but, for a long time past had given especial offence to Mr. Pitt by perpetually differing from him in the Cabinet, and, instead of affording assistance to the government in the House of Lords, actually opposing and ridiculing the measures of his colleagues. It was under these circumstances that, on two different occasions — in November, 1789, and again in the same month the following year — Mr. Pitt had found himself compelled to lay complaints of the chancellor's insubordination before the king, who, on each occasion, had contrived to patch up their differences. To Lord Auckland Storer writes on the 28th of November, 1789: "Much is said about the two chancellors¹ being on ill terms; but Thurlow will keep his place, and government will never turn him out. He will find fault and scold in all cases, but afterward support the worst." The fact is that Thurlow's great powers as an orator, the

¹ Alluding to Mr. Pitt as being chancellor of the exchequer.

awe in which the opposition lords stood of his fierce and witty denunciations, and, lastly, the reputation for rugged honesty which he had contrived to win from the public at large, had invested him with an importance which, probably, under no other combination of circumstances, he could have achieved for himself. To Mr. Pitt the king writes on the 21st of November, 1790: "My sentiments can be conveyed on the whole of this matter in a few words. The state of the House of Lords is such that opposition have many speakers; and, on the side of government, only the lord chancellor and Lord Hawkesbury; for the chief justice, though a worthy man and able lawyer, does not succeed as a debater.¹ This shows how necessary it is to remove every cause of misunderstanding with the chancellor, who is certainly to be gained by affection. With all his appearance of roughness he has a feeling heart, and that alone can guide him in contradiction to his temper."

¹ Lloyd, Lord Kenyon, who had succeeded Lord Mansfield as Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, was born in 1733, and died in 1802. The following extracts from Lord Kenyon's diary have reference to the misunderstanding between Mr. Pitt and Lord Thurlow: "1788, June 19. With Mr. Pitt by his desire, on the great coolness between him and the chancellor, on Arden being master of the rolls against the chancellor's inclination." "Dec. 8. Dined at lord chancellor's. He in very ill humour with Mr. Pitt. I endeavoured to soothe him, and stated the impropriety of thinking of private quarrels in the crisis of public business." "1789, March 24. With Mr. Pitt, to endeavour, if possible, to remove some of the grounds of shyness between him

That Thurlow, in persisting in his refractory conduct, not only greatly relied upon the personal favour he enjoyed with the king, but was also convinced that, in the event of his Majesty being compelled to choose between his two ministers, Mr. Pitt would be the person sacrificed, there seems every reason to believe. Events, however, proved how greatly he had deceived himself in his calculations. "Your friend, Lord Thurlow," observed Lord North to Nicholls, the author of the "Recollections," "thinks that his personal influence with the king authorises him to treat Mr. Pitt with *humeur*. Take my word for it, whenever Mr. Pitt says to the king, 'Sir, the Great Seal must be in other hands,' the king will take the Great Seal from Lord Thurlow, and never think any more about him." And so to a great extent it happened. When — after years of "great forbearance and good humour" on the part of Mr. Pitt — the chancellor's conduct became at length so intolerable as to compel the first minister to represent to his sovereign that either one or the other must

and lord chancellor." "Nov. 26. With Secretary Grenville. Read from him the king's commands to endeavour to settle differences between lord chancellor and Mr. Pitt." "1792, [May] 17. With Mr. Pitt at his request, when he informed me that, in consequence of the chancellor's opposing his measures, he had mentioned to the king that one must go out, and the chancellor was to do so. With the lord chancellor the same evening to hear the like." "June 1. With Mr. Pitt about the Great Seal." "June 15. Chancellor resigned Great Seal."

withdraw from the administration, the king, though he made a kind and earnest attempt to save his arrogant and impracticable old servant, manifested no hesitation in giving the preference to Pitt, whereupon the chancellor was informed that his Majesty had no further occasion for his services. As might have been expected from the temperament of the surly lawyer, his anger and indignation were excessive. "I did not think," he said to Lord Eldon, — then Sir John Scott, — "that the king would have parted with me so easily;" adding, in allusion to Mr. Pitt, "As to that other man, he has done to me just what I should have done to him, if I could." "I recollect," writes his friend Nicholls, "his saying to me, 'No man has a right to treat another in the way in which the king has treated me: we cannot meet again in the same room.'" Not only, however, do these complaints appear to be altogether unreasonable, but, as far as the king's feelings were concerned, we shall find him, many years afterward, speaking kindly and even affectionately of his former chancellor.

Mr. Pitt had been now first minister of the Crown for nearly nine years, during which period he had performed great and eminent services for his sovereign and his country. To his wisdom and firmness the king was alike indebted for a great share of his popularity, as well as for his long emancipation from the haughty dominion of the great Whig families. The country had no less

reason to be grateful to the young statesman. From the condition of exhaustion and humiliation to which Great Britain had been reduced by the American war, he had raised her to be the most prosperous and envied country in Europe. Owing to his unwearying exertions, to his enlightened views in respect to commerce and finance, and his ready invention of resources, the public exchequer had become replenished, and trade and manufactures thrived with unprecedented prosperity. In the success of his India Bill; in the measures which he carried through Parliament for the consolidation and diminution of taxes; in his provisions for the suppression of smuggling and the improvement of the Crown lands; and lastly, in his laudable and far-sighted endeavours to bring about a commercial treaty with France on the great principles of free trade, we find unequivocal proof of his preëminence as a wise and enlightened legislator. He not only kept his promise of introducing into Parliament a bill for the improvement of the representative system, but, "as a man and a minister," energetically and enthusiastically applied himself to ensure success to a measure which, as Lord Macaulay writes, "Lord Grey, at a later period, could accomplish only by means which, for a time, loosened the very foundations of the commonwealth."¹ Other wise and liberal

¹ Mr. Pitt introduced his Reform Bill into Parliament on the 18th April, 1785. It was thrown out in the House of Commons

measures were either carried or else warmly advocated by Mr. Pitt. In February, 1791, he supported a motion brought forward by Mr. John Mitford, afterward Lord Redesdale, for the relief of the Roman Catholics. "Let the statute book," exclaimed Fox on that occasion, — and Pitt coincided with him in the noble sentiment, — "let the statute book be revised, and every iniquitous law expunged which attaches penalties to mere opinions!" In May following, these two great men again contended side by side in favour of Fox's famous Libel Bill, which extended to juries the same powers in trials for libel as in the case of other criminal trials. Neither, in the communications between Great Britain and foreign powers, had the honour of the former suffered in the hands of Mr. Pitt. In 1787 the high tone which he adopted, and the vigorous measures which he took, compelled France to relinquish the designs which she entertained against the liberties of Holland. Again, in the famous dispute with Spain, in 1790, relative to the settlement on Nootka Sound, he forced the court of Madrid to withdraw its haughty pretensions, and to restore the territory

by a majority of 248 votes to 174. Mr. Pitt, however, was not to be disheartened. "Parliamentary reform," he wrote to the Duke of Rutland, "must, I am still sure, sooner or later be carried in both countries. If it is well done, the sooner the better." The names of the members who voted in favour of Mr. Pitt's motion, as well as the places for which they sat in the House of Commons, will be found in the Parliamentary History.

which it had seized. During the discussions on these momentous questions in the House of Commons, Mr. Pitt had displayed his usual preëminent ability no less as an orator than as a statesman. But it was in supporting the parliamentary efforts made by his friend Wilberforce to suppress the horrors of the slave-trade, that the eloquence of the minister shone forth most fervidly and imperishably. When, on the 2d of April, 1792, Fox, Windham, and Grey walked away together from the House of Commons, they mutually agreed that the speech, in favour of the abolition of slavery, to which they had just listened from the lips of their great rival, was not only the most extraordinary display of eloquence they had ever heard, but that during the last twenty minutes that Mr. Pitt had spoken he really seemed to be inspired. There was one passage in that speech which elicited their especial admiration. He had been mourning, in language of singular beauty, over the benighted state of Africa, when presently his words became more fervid, and his countenance lighted up with animation, as he proceeded to express a sanguine hope that the land of wailing and bondage might yet be illuminated by the rays of religion, science, philosophy, and virtue. It was at this, the acme of his eloquence, that the first rays of the rising sun, shooting, as it were prophetically, through the windows of the House of Commons, suggested to

him the following apt and admirable quotation from Virgil :

“ Nos . . . primus equis Oriens afflavit anhelis,
Illic sera rubens accendit lumina Vesper.”

“Mr. Pitt’s speech in the debate on Monday last,” writes Lord Auckland, “was the finest display of eloquence in the recollection of this country.”

Thus far, Mr. Pitt’s conduct as a statesman and as minister seems to merit all the encomiums which have been lavished upon him by his admirers. It still remained, however, to be shown whether, in the event of a vast war, or the advent of fierce political convulsions, this great master of administrative abilities and parliamentary skill would display the same genius, the same courage, and the same command of resources, which, in the tranquil times of peace, had rendered him the most successful and powerful legislator in Europe. The day on which he was to be put upon his trial was fast approaching. In France, a mighty people had become sensible of the cruel wrongs which, for centuries, they had endured from the tyranny and selfishness of kings, and from the grinding despotism of a privileged and demoralised aristocracy. On the 5th of May, 1789, the day on which the French Revolution may be said to have commenced, the States General had met at Versailles. On the 14th of July following, the memorable

fortress-prison, the Bastile, had been stormed and captured by the citizens of Paris. On the 6th of October, the same year, the palace of Versailles had been attacked by a furious mob, and Louis the Sixteenth and his beautiful queen carried, humbled and terrified, to the Tuileries ; and lastly, on the 22d of June, 1791, their flight from France had been prevented, and fresh sufferings and indignities heaped upon their devoted heads. The worst, however, that could happen was yet to befall them.

In England, the French Revolution, previously to its becoming profaned by wholesale bloodshed and barbarity, was hailed with satisfaction by all true lovers of freedom, and, among the foremost, by Mr. Pitt. In the great movement which was advancing in France, men perceived, not only the regeneration of that long-oppressed country, but the hope of its being the means of introducing more humane and liberal institutions into the other tyrannies of Europe. "How much the greatest event it is," writes Fox, "that ever happened in the world, and how much the best!"¹ Sir Samuel Romilly also speaks of it as "the most glorious event and the happiest for mankind that has ever taken place since human affairs were recorded." By the celebrated Revolution Society the French

¹ Fox apparently alludes to the destruction of the Bastile on the 14th of July, 1789, his letter being dated the 30th of that month.

Revolution was, of course, hailed with extraordinary enthusiasm. When, therefore, on the 4th of November, its members met to hold their annual commemoration of the birthday of William the Third, and of the triumph of those great principles which had raised the house of Brunswick to the throne, it was natural that the speakers of the day should dwell, in elated language, on the great victory which freedom had achieved on the other side of the British Channel. "I have lived," spoke out the eminent dissenting minister, Doctor Price, "to see a diffusion of knowledge which has undermined superstition and error. I have lived to see the rights of men better understood than ever, and nations panting for liberty which seemed to have lost the idea of it. I have lived to see thirty millions of people indignantly and resolutely spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice; their king led in triumph, and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects. After sharing in the benefits of one revolution, I have been spared to be a witness to two other revolutions, both glorious; and now, methinks I see the ardour for liberty catching and spreading, and a general amendment beginning in human affairs; the dominion of kings changed for the dominion of laws, and the dominion of priests giving way to the dominion of reason and conscience." Not only were the French people enthusiastically congratulated by the association on

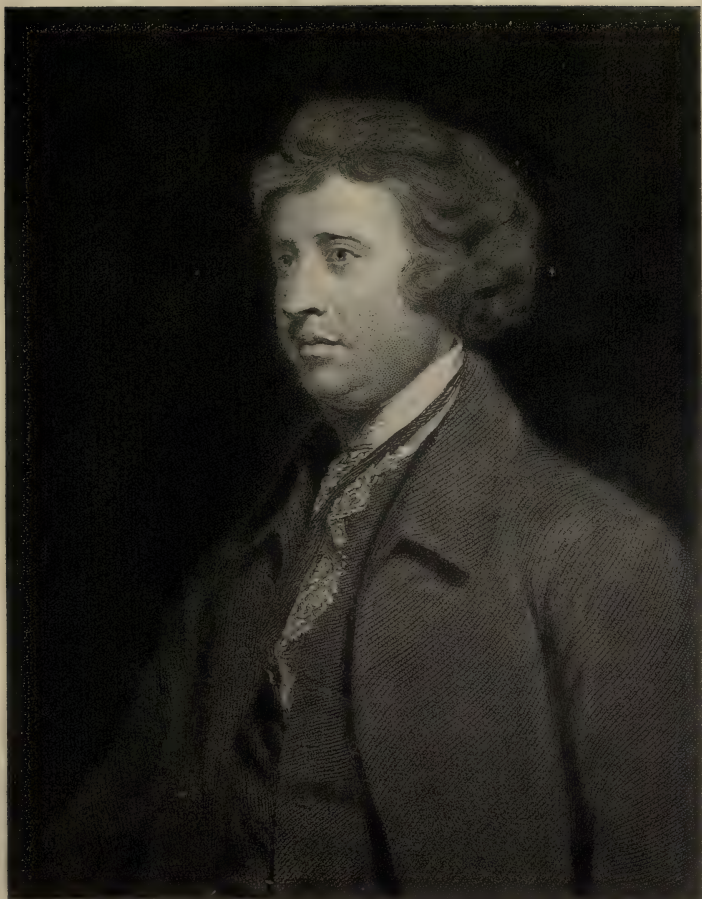
their triumph over despotism and bigotry, but an address to that effect was subsequently drawn up and conveyed by the chairman of the association, Earl Stanhope,¹ to the Duke de la Rochefoucault, to be laid before the National Assembly of France. As might be expected, the reply of that distinguished nobleman, as well as that of the Archbishop of Aix, president of the National Assembly, teemed with reciprocal expressions of gratitude and good will toward their foreign brother-labourers in the cause of liberty, humanity, and the extension of human happiness. Thus did eminent and right-minded men, on both sides the Channel, congratulate themselves on the dawn of a revolution which, though doubtless destined in the end to advance the happiness and dignity of the human race, was for the time productive of the most senseless and atrocious crimes that ever degraded civilisation, as well as of the longest, most bloody, and ruinous wars which in modern times have devastated Europe.

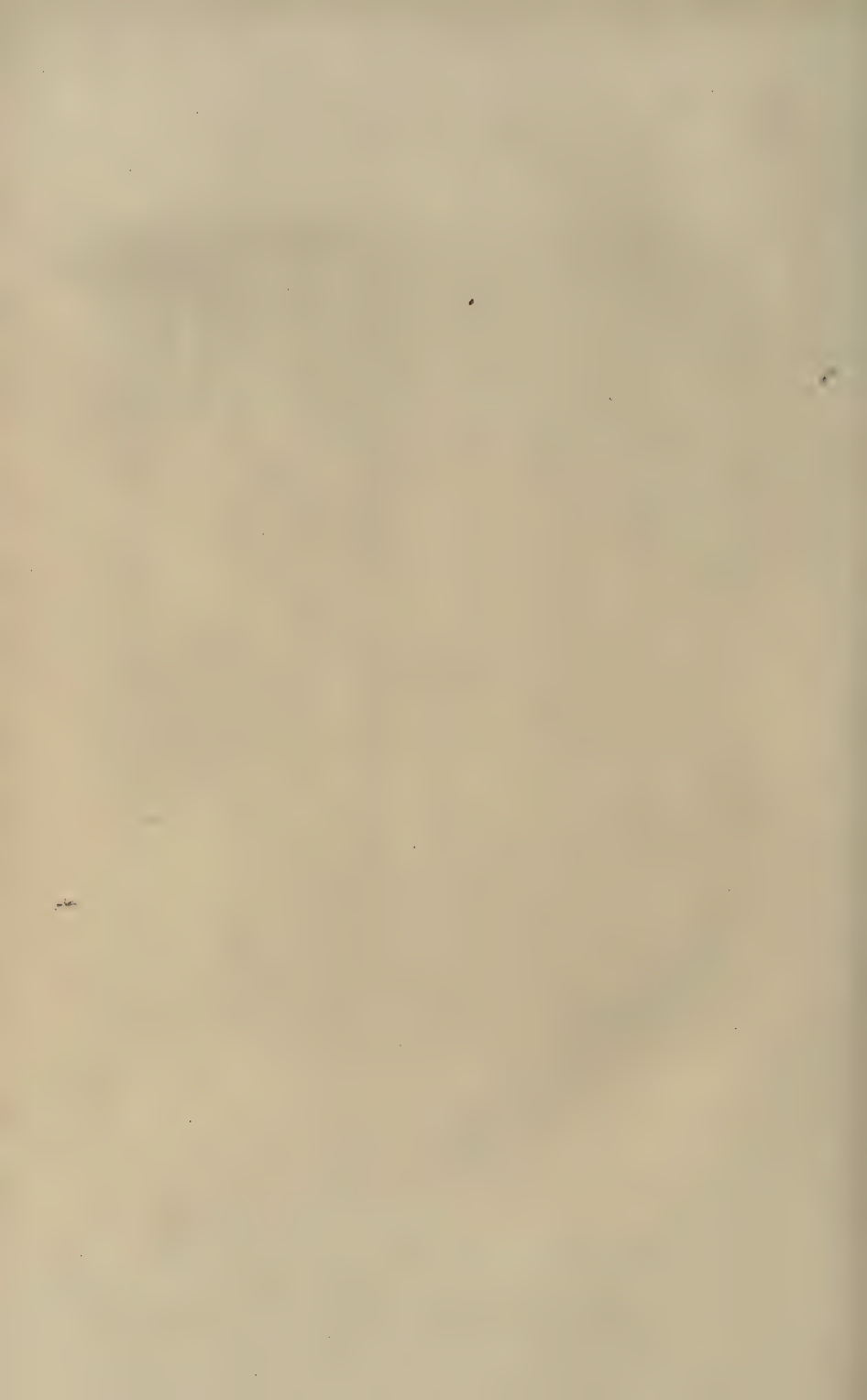
But while the friends of liberal laws and institutions were congratulating themselves on the birth of liberty in France, it was natural that, as the true character of the French people and of the French Revolution developed itself, there should

¹ Lord Stanhope, writes his acquaintance, Lord Holland, "was, in some senses of the word, the truest Jacobin I have ever known. He not only deemed monarchy, a clergy, and a nobility, but property, or at least landed property by descent, unlawful abuses."

be many persons in this country who began to feel alarm for the safety of the Church and the throne. Even so enlightened a friend of freedom as Burke went no farther than to express a cold and cautious approval of the new state of affairs across the Channel. He admitted, indeed, that it was very likely to be productive of good, but, before committing himself by words of approbation, he wished to judge for himself, he said, whether the leaders of the movement in France were capable of using their tools in a workmanlike manner, and whether the French people themselves were ripe for freedom.

As time passed on, and as one violent popular excess succeeded another in France, Burke not only saw no reason to regret his former guarded silence, but gradually imbued himself with a deep horror of French principles, and apparently an almost morbid detestation of the French people. To use his own impetuous words in the House of Commons, the new Constitution of France was to him "the unprincipled, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy of a people whose government was anarchy and whose religion was atheism." In his further opinion, not only were such Englishmen enemies to the state who looked with favour on the French Revolution, but he even included in his anathemas the advocates of parliamentary reform. From these ardent feelings unhappily resulted the breaking up for a time





of the great Whig party, as well as the dissolution of his long and memorable friendship with Fox. Fox, who in days of yore had been idolised by him as freedom's most eloquent and undaunted champion, was now regarded by Burke as the apostle of atheism and sedition. The story of the final alienation of these two great men is painfully interesting. On two different occasions, in the House of Commons, — viz., on the 9th of February, 1790, but more especially on the 8th of April, 1791, when Burke happened to be absent, — Fox had given great offence to his old friend, not only by his democratic encomiums on the French Republic, and by ridiculing hereditary rank and titles as antiquated absurdities, but he had particularly offended Burke's pride as an author, by sneering at one of the most beautiful passages in his famous work, the "Reflections on the Revolution in France." To this speech Burke had hoped to have an opportunity of replying on the 15th, during the discussion on the Russian armament. Fox, however, on that occasion, not only anticipated him by speaking first, but gave fresh umbrage to the illustrious statesman and orator by launching into the most enthusiastic laudations of the new Constitution adopted by the French people. In his judgment, he said, it was "the most stupendous and glorious edifice of liberty that had been erected on the foundation of human integrity in any time or country." Burke,

immediately Fox sat down, rose to reply to him; but it was by this time three o'clock in the morning, and accordingly, amidst mingled and opposite cries from both sides of the House of "Chair! chair! Hear! hear! Order! order!" he was compelled to repress the expression of his sentiments, though not his indignation. It was a scene, he exclaimed, bitterly, which was only to be paralleled in the political assemblies of a neighbouring country.

At length, on the 21st of April, on the occasion of a discussion on the Quebec Government Bill, the opportunity of reply, for which Burke had been so anxiously waiting, presented itself. It was his intention, as his friends were well aware, to bring into play on that occasion all his eloquence, his learning, and powers of invective, in disparagement of the principles of the French Revolution and of its admirers in England. This intention, if persisted in, must necessarily terminate his long connection with the Whigs as well as his private friendship with Fox, and accordingly the latter resolved upon calling upon him at his residence in Queen Anne Street, in the hope of being able to divert him from his design. It was, however, to little purpose. Burke, indeed, received him with all the cordiality of former times, spoke to him of the kind manner in which the king was said to have lately mentioned Fox's name, nay, even confided to him the arguments which he intended to

make use of in the House of Commons against French principles and French devices. Burke, however, had fully convinced himself that he had duties to perform to his country as well as to his friend, and consequently Fox's words fell upon insensible ears. They never again, it is said, met in the same apartment; and when, at the end of their interview, they walked together to the House of Commons, it was the last time that the arm of Fox was ever placed in that of Burke.

Seldom has a more important debate taken place in the House of Commons than that of the 6th of May, 1790. The paramount object of Burke was to warn and convince his fellow countrymen of the danger of imitating the example of the French people; while, on the other hand, the Liberal party, afraid of the probable effects of his fervid and indignant eloquence, were resolved, if possible, to prevent his obtaining a hearing. Accordingly, throughout the fierce and eloquent invectives which he poured forth against the Constitution and government of France, he was repeatedly assailed by cries of "Order!" by hootings, and other offensive interruptions, thus producing an irritation in his mind which the language of Fox, when he rose to reply to him, was far from having a tendency to allay. The rights of the people, exclaimed Fox, were recognised in the statute book. They were the basis of the British

Constitution. They were inherent rights which no prescription could supersede, and no accident could remove or obliterate. These had been formerly the principles of his right honourable friend, from whose lips he had learned them, though he now ridiculed them as mere visionary notions. Having been taught by that friend that no revolt of a nation was ever caused without provocation, he could not but rejoice at a revolution which rested upon the same basis as our own, the immutable and unalienable rights of man.

Again Burke arose to address the House. A personal attack, he said, had been made upon him by one of the oldest of his friends. "Certainly," he observed, "it is indiscreet at any period, but especially at my time of life, to provoke enemies or give my friends occasion to desert me; yet, if my firm and steady adherence to the British Constitution place me in such a dilemma, I am ready to risk all, and with my last words to exclaim, 'Fly from the French Constitution!'" Fox here whispered that there was "no loss of friendship." "Yes," solemnly exclaimed Burke, "I regret to say there is. I know the value of my line of conduct. I have indeed made a great sacrifice. I have done my duty, though I have lost my friend. There is something in the accursed French Revolution which envenoms everything it touches."

The words so sensibly moved the truly affectionate heart of Fox, that, on rising to reply, he

was so overcome as to find it difficult to give utterance to his words. He not only shed tears, but was affected even to sobbing. During these painful moments not only did an impressive silence pervade the House, but there are said to have been persons in the gallery who declared there was not a dry eye around them. When Fox at length recovered himself, he made a last attempt, in language equally manly and touching, to recover the friendship of that illustrious man whose disciple he had been proud to call himself. Burke, however, was not to be appeased. His upright and ardent, though prejudiced mind, shrank from a friendly communion with one whose principles he believed tended to rebellion and anarchy, and, accordingly, thus mournfully was brought to a close a memorable friendship which had survived the vicissitudes of a quarter of a century.

CHAPTER XII.

Divisions among the Whigs on the Subject of Parliamentary Reform — Revolutionary Societies in England — Equanimity of the King — Proposed Coalition between the Tories and the Conservative Section of the Whigs — The King Favourable to a Coalition — Vacillating Conduct of the Duke of Portland — Changes in the Administration — Fox Accused by His Friends of Breaking Up the Great Whig Party — His Name Struck off the List of Privy Councillors — Pitt and the King Severally Averse to a War with France — Sufferings of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette.

THE eloquent writings and speeches of Burke, powerful as was the effect which they produced at the time, formed, after all, only one of the leading causes of the division which now took place in the ranks of the Whig party. The violent cry for parliamentary reform, which was raised by one section of the party, was as strongly reprobated by those who were styled the "alarmist Whigs." There was doubtless much to be said on both sides. By the latter it was argued that a more unpropitious season for altering the representative system it would be impossible to select. At so critical a time, they said, — when admiration of the doctrines of the French Revolution was no longer confined to a few wild visionaries, — reform meant nothing

more nor less than a subversion of the government, and, if conceded, might draw down ruin alike on the Church, the throne, and the aristocracy. But the bolder and more liberal section of the Whig party argued very differently. The Constitution, they said, was notoriously imperfect in practice. Whether from neglect or wilful corruption, abuses had crept into it which threatened its very existence. Was it not, they asked, alike an abominable fact and a crying and perilous evil, that no fewer than one hundred and sixty-three English and Welsh members of the House of Commons were returned to Parliament by the direct nomination or influence of seventy-one peers, and that one hundred and thirty-nine members were returned by ninety-one powerful commoners? If any danger, they argued, impended over the state, it was not from what was passing on the other side of the Channel, but from the lamentable condition of affairs at home, and from the want of that manly spirit of inquiry and resistance which the people of England had too long allowed to remain dormant in their breasts. That spirit, however, they insisted, had at length been happily aroused, and now, therefore, was the proper and seasonable time for reforming the national representation, and extirpating the many shameful abuses which defaced the Constitution. They complained, moreover, that their principles and intentions had been purposely misrepresented

by the government and by the friends of arbitrary power, who, for purposes of their own, had wilfully and cruelly chosen to confound them with the few impotent democrats and theorists who doubtless were to be found in one or two of the revolutionary societies of the day. Their object, they said, was not to destroy, but to preserve the Constitution; not to revolutionise the state, but, by effecting a timely, wise, and temperate measure of reform, to raise a bulwark which should protect the Constitution against the evil designs of those who meditated far more radical and sweeping changes.

Such were among the arguments of many of the wisest and most right-minded men of the time. "Unless some reforms be made," writes the excellent Wilberforce, "though we should get well through our present difficulties, they will recur hereafter with aggravated force." Such also was the opinion of Lord Grey. "Some time or other," he prophetically exclaimed in the House of Commons, "credit would be awarded to him and to his friends for their present opinions." Tardily as that credit was dealt out, it was at length extended to him, when, after a forty years' crusade against bigotry and corruption, he triumphantly carried through Parliament, in the year 1832, that great measure of representative reform which he had so warmly, though fruitlessly, advocated in 1792.

There was another point upon which there existed a wide difference of opinion among the leading Whigs. While the alarmist section of the party approved and aided Mr. Pitt in carrying out those excessive measures of coercion which he unfortunately deemed necessary for the public safety, the ultra section of the Whigs denounced them as arbitrary, cruel, and impolitic. Those measures, they argued, amounted to nothing more nor less than an attempt to gag the Constitution, and were therefore fraught with imminent and lasting peril to the liberty of the subject. Arbitrary statutes were necessarily the preludes to senseless and cruel persecutions. As for Great Britain being permanently or radically infected by the wild doctrines and levelling theories adopted by the French, they treated the notion with the contempt which it seems to have deserved. They insisted that the danger had been grossly and needlessly exaggerated; that the desire for any sweeping political change was confined to the lower and uneducated classes, hounded on by a few political enthusiasts and needy adventurers; that it was an insult to the wealth and intelligence of the land to suppose that they were not more than a match for the half-crazed speculatists and mob orators who were clamouring for too extensive concessions; and lastly, that so far from its being necessary to invest the government with any extraordinary and unconstitutional powers, the

law of the land, as it stood, was amply strong enough to protect property and to suppress insurrection and disorder.

On the other side, the favourite old war-cry of the Tories, that the Church was in danger, was raised with its customary success. Easy enough it was — for the facts were incontrovertible — to point to the atrocious barbarities which were being perpetrated in France, — atrocities at which the blood still curdles and the heart still sickens, — and which, most unfortunately, were committed in the holy name of freedom. But here again the Liberal party had their reply. Indignantly they insisted that the present popular excesses in France sprang not from freedom, but were the results of tyranny and oppression. Indignantly they pointed to the recent nefarious partition of Poland; to the late menacing conference of the Austrian and Prussian despots; to the march of those imperial vultures upon Paris, and their evident design to possess themselves of the fairest provinces of France; to their notorious antagonism to the liberties of the human race; to their daring to dictate to a nation of freemen the amount of liberty which it was right or safe that they should enjoy; and lastly, to the insolent and atrocious proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick, threatening Paris with total destruction, and its inhabitants with military execution. No! exclaimed the Liberal party in England; it

was not freedom, but tyranny, which was responsible for the crimes of the French people. So debasing had been the infamous despotism under which they had groaned, as to have unfitted them to turn to a proper account, all at once, the inestimable blessing which they had achieved for themselves. But because tyranny had produced this effect, and had made them slaves, was it to be endured that they were always to be kept slaves? "No!" exclaimed Sheridan, in an eloquent reply to Lord Mornington, in the House of Commons; "Wild and unsettled as their state of mind necessarily was, upon the events which threw such power suddenly into their hands, the surrounding states goaded them into a still more savage state of madness, fury, and desperation. We unsettled their reason and then reviled their insanity. We drove them to the extremities that produced the evils we arraigned. We baited them like beasts, until at length we made them so. The conspiracy of Pilnitz, and the brutal threats of the royal abettors of that plot against the rights of nations and of men, have in truth to answer for all the additional misery, horrors, and iniquity, which have since disgraced and incensed humanity. Such has been your conduct toward France that you have created the passions which you persecute. You mark a nation to be cut off from the world. You covenant for their extermination. You swear to hunt them in their inmost recesses.

You load them with every species of execration, and you now come forth with whining declamations on the horror of their turning upon you with the horror which you inspired."

Whether, at this critical period in our history, the Constitution of Great Britain was exposed to the greater amount of danger from the example of French precepts and excesses, or, on the other hand, from the arbitrary restrictions which were imposed upon it by the government, we do not feel called upon to offer an opinion. Nevertheless, that high Tory doctrines were broached, and a stretch of power exercised, which were calculated to create equal alarm and indignation in the breast of every lover of freedom, can scarcely, we think, be denied. For instance, when we find so able and influential a person as Arthur Young, the agriculturist, publishing the slavish doctrine that unequal representation, rotten boroughs, and corrupt parliamentary majorities, are not only no drawback, but are conducive to English liberty; again, when we read of the president of a popular loyal association advocating the frightful tenet that the Commons of England derive their political existence and authority from the king, and that the king could carry on his functions as well without as with them; again, when we discover a bishop preaching the exploded doctrine that "the opposition to the sovereign power is an opposition to God's provi-

dential arrangements," and another bishop asserting in the House of Lords that "the poor have nothing to do with the laws but to obey them ;" and lastly, when we find the Lord Justice Clerk of Scotland declaring from the bench that the landed interest alone has a right to be represented in Parliament, and that people who possessed nothing but personal property were nothing more than a rabble without any claim to be represented — we surely may be excused if we close with shame, indignation, and contempt, the pages which contain such dangerous and grovelling sophistries. At all events, thus, in those days of political agitation and alarm, did men argue according to their principles, their prejudices, or their fears. In the opinion of the Tories and of the aristocratic Whigs, the conduct of Mr. Pitt, during the French revolutionary crisis, saved the country from anarchy and bloodshed ; while, on the other hand, it was the conviction of the small phalanx of which Fox and Grey were the intrepid leaders that he was piloting the Constitution to the brink of ruin.¹

¹ "The main points of difference between us," writes Mr. Thomas Grenville to Fox at a later period (29th December, 1793), "are two. The one is respecting the war with France, which you condemn and oppose, while I think it the greatest of all duties to support and maintain it to the utmost. The other respects an apprehension which I entertain of those principles and designs in this country adverse to the Constitution of it, which makes me feel it to be my duty to resist whatever can

A third cause of disunion in the ranks of the opposition was the dissatisfaction felt by the conservative section of the Whig party at some of their more liberal friends having joined the celebrated society of the "Friends of the People," whose professed object was the correction of state abuses by procuring a large extension of parliamentary representation. There were many well-informed persons, however, who believed that the association contained much more dangerous elements, and consequently, when they beheld men of high social position and of distinguished talent league with individuals who were more than suspected of harbouring republican designs, it occasioned an amount of alarm which alike proved disastrous, for a time, to the cause of moderate reform, and assisted to justify the harsh repressive measures which government had introduced. Among the leading members, for instance, were Mr. Grey, Sir James Macintosh, Mr., afterward Lord, Erskine, Whitbread, Sheridan, Tierney, the Earl of Lauderdale, the Lords Dacre and Kinnaid, Lord John Russell, afterward Duke of Bedford, Rogers the poet, Pigott, afterward solicitor-general, and Leach, afterward vice-chancellor of

give to such designs either strength, opportunity, or countenance; while you, on the other hand, believe in no such designs, and believe the danger to arise from there being too little spirit of free inquiry and resistance in the minds of the people of this country."

England. Although Fox never joined the association, it nevertheless seems to have had his full sanction and support. "During my father's last illness," writes Lord Grey's son and biographer, "when no longer able to walk, he used to be wheeled about the house in a chair, and on one occasion stopping, as he often did, before Mr. Fox's bust, and speaking of the influence he had held over him, he added: 'Yet he did not always use it as he might have done. One word from him would have kept me out of all the mess of the "Friends of the People," but he never spoke it.' " It was true, said Lord Grey of himself, that the political principles which he advocated in those days were not more advanced than those which he afterward carried into law when first minister of the Crown in 1832, but he added that, though not aware of the fact at the time, there were unquestionably certain members of the association whose tenets were of so ultra democratic a character as to render it unsafe to hold communication with them. "On mentioning this circumstance to the late Lord Dacre," writes General Grey, "he told me he remembered Mr. Fox used always to say he did not like to discourage the young ones." "I cannot," writes the king, in reference to the new society and to Fox's violent language in Parliament, "see any substantial difference in their being joined in debate by Mr. Fox, and his not being a member of that society."

Disastrous as the spread of French revolutionary principles might possibly prove to the Crown and Constitution of Great Britain, we nevertheless find the king watching passing events with the greatest equanimity, as well as speaking and writing of them with temper and judgment. "He conversed," said Miss Burney, who listened to him in Madame Schwellenberg's apartment in April, 1790, "almost wholly with General Grenville upon the affairs of France, and in a manner so unaffected, open, and manly — so highly superior to all despotic principles even while most condemning the unlicensed fury of the Parisian mob — that I wished all the nations of the world to have heard him, that they might have known the real existence of a patriot king."

Similarly temperate and judicious was the language and conduct of George the Third during the disgraceful Birmingham riots in 1791, when, on the occasion of some political friends of Doctor Priestley celebrating the second anniversary of the capture of the Bastile by a public dinner, the loyal population of Birmingham attacked the hotel in which the democrats were dining, and afterward, notwithstanding the doctor was not at the dinner, demolished his residence, containing his valuable library, MSS., and philosophical apparatus, as well as the chapels and houses of other dissenters. Although so strong a popular demonstration in favour of church and state could scarcely fail

to be highly gratifying to the king, we nevertheless find him insisting on equal and strict justice being dealt out, totally irrelative of all political considerations.

*The King to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas.*¹

“WINDSOR, 16th July, 1791, 28 min. past 4 P. M.

“The sending orders for three troops of the 15th Regiment of dragoons to march toward Birmingham to restore order, if the civil magistrates have not been able, is incumbent on government. Though I cannot but feel better pleased that Priestley is the sufferer for the doctrines he and his party have instilled, and that the people see them in their true light, yet I cannot approve their having employed such atrocious means of showing their discontent.”

In order to render the next note from the king intelligible, it is necessary to observe that, of the persons who were convicted for their share in the Birmingham riots, three were hanged, and that a fourth, William Hands, very narrowly escaped sharing the same fate — one Hervey having positively sworn at the trial that he saw him pulling up the floor of one of the demolished houses. After Hands's conviction, however, it was made manifest, almost to a certainty, that his real object

¹ Mr. Dundas was at this time secretary of state for the home department.

was to extricate from suffocation some drunken men who were in a cellar beneath, and accordingly the fact was brought by Sir Robert Lawley, a member for the county, under the notice of the secretary of state, and afterward of the king.

The King to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas.

“WEYMOUTH, 22d September, 1791.

“The informations on oath of William Hands having broken up the floor of Mr. Ryland’s house, with a view to prevent some drunken men from being suffocated in the cellar, seem so clear, that I cannot but coincide with the opinion of the propriety of extending that mercy to him which he undoubtedly would have received at his trial, had Hervey’s evidence been given on the points now so properly stated. It is inconceivable how any one, possessed of so favourable a circumstance, should not have voluntarily produced it, even though not called upon by the judge at the time. I trust no time will be lost in transmitting to Sir Robert Lawley a decision which must give him such reasonable pleasure. G. R.”¹

By this time, the king’s feelings toward his old enemies, the aristocratic Whigs, had undergone a

¹ The originals of this and the preceding letter were communicated by the second Viscount Melville to the late Right Hon. J. W. Croker.

material change—a change partly owing to the common danger to which they were exposed from the advance of revolutionary principles, and partly that the king's dreadful malady, in 1788–89, had had the effect of greatly softening his political prejudices and allaying old animosities. On the 12th of December, 1791, Lord Auckland writes to Mr. Morton Eden: “It is impossible to describe to you how perfectly well the king is. He is quite an altered man, and not what you knew him even before his illness. His manner is gentle, quiet, and, when he is pleased, quite cordial. He speaks, even of those who are opposed to his government, with complacency, and without sneer or acrimony. At the same time, he is most steadily attached to his ministers. As long as he remains so well, the tranquillity of this country is on a rock, for the public prosperity is great, and the nation is right-minded, and the commerce and resources are increasing.”

In the same degree that the aristocratic section of the Whig party grew more and more conservative in their language and opinions, they not only increased in favour with the king, but, in due time, it became evident that he would make no great objection to admit them to a reasonable share of power. For instance, in June, 1792, we find Mr. Pitt assuring Lord Loughborough that his Majesty would not only consent to, but would be pleased with, a coalition; a few days afterward,

in an interview with Lord Bute,¹ the king spoke of the Duke of Portland in the highest terms of esteem and regard ; and again, on the 4th of July, his reception of the opposition at his levee is described as having been "most gracious." He was even heard to say at the levee that he had no personal objection to Mr. Fox.

To the leaders of the Whig party, the project for a coalition was not less pleasing than it was to the king. "Long *tête-à-tête* conversation with the Duke of Portland" writes Lord Malmesbury on the 10th of June. "He agreed that the circumstances of the times made a coalition with Pitt a very necessary measure." Accordingly, within the next three days, the project was communicated by the Duke of Portland to Fox, who, though he seems to have been somewhat hurt at the first advances not having been made directly to himself, nevertheless admitted how desirable it was that a union of parties should be effected.² He required no more, he said, than that the measure should bear no appearance of the Whigs having acceded to Mr. Pitt's ministry, and that both parties should share, on equal terms, the power and patronage of office. The post which

¹ John, fourth Earl, and first Marquis of Bute, was born in July, 1744, and died 10th November, 1814.

² According to Lord Holland, a secret meeting took place about this time between Pitt and Fox, but no particulars relating to it have been handed down to posterity.

Fox's friends would have preferred for him was the secretaryship for foreign affairs, but to this arrangement objections were raised in the royal closet. Though the king, as Lord Loughborough was authorised to tell the opposition, had entirely forgotten "everything else," yet Mr. Fox's recent language and conduct in Parliament deprived him of the power of offering him the appointment till after the lapse of a few months.

Whether Fox was offended at this marked exclusion from power, or whether he was over-persuaded by his political friends, certain it is, that he not only suddenly began to raise obstacles against the proposed coalition, but that the great influence which he possessed over the Duke of Portland was employed to induce his Grace to adopt the views of the ultra Whigs. According to Lord Malmesbury, who met Fox at dinner at Lord Loughborough's on the 16th of June, "he [Fox] contended that it was impossible ever to suppose that Pitt would admit him to an equal share of power, and that, whatever might be his own feelings or readiness to give way, he could not, for the sake of the honour and pride of the party, come in on any other terms. Pitt must have the treasury, and he, on his part, had friends in the House of Commons he must attend to. These friends I conceived to be Sheridan,¹ Grey,

¹ "Fox," writes the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the 22d of May, "is supposed to give himself up entirely to Sheridan."

Erskine, and Lord Robert Spencer. After stating these doubts and difficulties, and dwelling on them with a degree of peevishness and obstinacy very unlike him, he, however, ended by saying that he loved coalitions; that, as a party man, he thought it a good thing for his party to come into office, were it only for a month; and that, under the particular circumstances of the country, he thought it of very great importance that a strong administration should exist. He reasoned on foreign politics with his usual ability, and on the same system as formerly. When we got to Burlington House he was not inclined to speak, and it was with great difficulty I could lead him and the Duke of Portland into discourse. Fox repeated nearly what he said to me on the way, spoke with acrimony of Pitt, and repeatedly said the pride of the party must be saved. I observed purposely, that I conceived, if the Duke of Portland and he were agreed, they necessarily must lead the party, and that all their friends would follow them. The duke seemed to acquiesce, but Fox was silent and embarrassed, and said, with a degree of harshness very unlike his usual manner, that he did not believe that

"Lord Fitzwilliam," writes Lord Malmesbury, on the 18th of June, "expressed his dislike to Sheridan; said he might have a lucrative place, but never could be admitted to one of trust and confidence." Thus Sheridan was not unlikely to do his utmost to prevail upon Fox to decline taking a seat in a cabinet from which it is evident that he himself was to be excluded.

Pitt was sincere, and that, even if he was sincere, he did not believe any coalition could take place.”¹

Thus, principally through the antagonism of Fox, was this important negotiation temporarily prevented—a failure the more to be regretted, since both Fox and the Duke of Portland still remained of opinion that the exigencies of the state required a coalition. On the 21st of June, for instance, we find Fox speaking of it as “so d——d right a thing that it must be done;” and again, on the 27th of July, the duke writes to Lord Malmesbury that he considers it of such importance to the country, that he should be sorry to omit any means of carrying it into execution. The conditions, however, on which alone the duke and Fox could be brought to negotiate were so exorbitant, that neither the king nor the public were likely to listen to them with patience. “Fox,” writes Lord Malmesbury, on the 30th of July, “made Pitt’s quitting the treasury a *sine quâ non*, and was so opinionative

¹ Lord Malmesbury again writes, on the 17th of June: “Lord Loughborough called on me. He related very accurately all that had passed between him, Pitt, and Dundas, on the Thursday. It was nearly what I had before heard from the Duke of Portland. Pitt, he said, wore every appearance of sincerity and frankness; that in speaking to him and in listening to him he started no difficulties or objections, but assured him it was his wish to unite cordially and heartily; not in the way of bargain, but to form a strong and united ministry.”

and fixed about it, that it was impossible even to reason with him on the subject." It may be mentioned that, of the leaders of the Whig party, Earl Fitzwilliam agreed with Fox and the Duke of Portland that Pitt's removal from the head of the treasury was absolutely requisite, while, on the other hand, Lords Loughborough and Malmesbury considered it not only an unnecessary but an unreasonable proposition. Pitt, writes Storer to Lord Auckland, must be first, and Fox cannot be second. When, on the 22d of June, Lord Malmesbury sat down to breakfast with Edmund Burke, he found him highly incensed against Fox and his obstructive policy. There was no doing without Fox, he observed, and nothing could be done with him. "Mr. Fox's coach," he said, "stopped the way."

But though these remarkable negotiations were thus broken off, events subsequently occurred which led, before the close of the year, to their renewal. The times, critical as they had been in June, had become far more so in December. Louis the Sixteenth was on the eve of his trial and execution. A war with France was, in the opinion of many persons, inevitable. Sedition also was rife at home, and consequently, in the judgment of the great mass of reflecting people, the state had never stood in greater need of a happy union of political parties. Failure, as was well known, was certain to be the result of any

further attempt at negotiation with Fox, and accordingly the next step of the conservative Whigs was to endeavour to detach the Duke of Portland from the influence of his impracticable friend. Over and over again they pointed out to his Grace the perilous tendency of Fox's advocacy of French principles, the ruin with which it threatened the country, and the discredit which their continued political connection with Fox reflected upon themselves, both individually and as a party. Day after day, they implored the vacillating duke to act a manly and resolute part by openly avowing, in his place in Parliament, his attachment to those conservative principles which they were all aware he entertained in private. "The only word we could draw forth," writes Lord Malmesbury, speaking of one of these occasions, "was that he was against anything that could widen the breach, and put it out of Fox's power to return, and drive him into desperate opposition. I, although I have often seen him benumbed and paralysed, never saw him, or any one else, so completely so before. All was one dead silence on his part. He seemed in a trance, and nothing could be so painful as these two hours." The duke admitted, indeed, — not on this, but on another occasion, — that the interests of the country, as well as of his party, demanded from him a public intimation of his having separated himself from Fox and the ultra Whigs;

but so great, he said, was his "private affection and attachment to Mr. Fox," such his "predilection and tenderness" for him, that, weak as he knew it to be, he shrank with the most poignant reluctance from severing ties which had so long bound them to one another. Nevertheless, day after day, the duke's friends continued to importune him with their arguments and remonstrances. By his keeping aloof, they said, from the moderate Whigs, he would become "partaker of Fox's bad reputation and unpopularity." He was their leader, they told him, and they wished to retain him as their leader; but unless he stood boldly forward as their recognised chief, he "might expect soon to hear more on the subject." As for Fox, they said that though they, too, personally loved him and revered his talents, yet they would no longer endure his being regarded by the world as their leader, thus to all appearance countenancing and identifying themselves with his principles.

At length, the duke not only showed himself inclined to listen to reason, but a promise was wrung from him that, at the first opportunity which might occur in the House of Lords, he would signify his approval of the policy pursued by the government, and further, that his son, Lord Tichfield, should follow his example in the House of Commons. Such an opportunity occurred only two days afterward, during the progress of the

Alien Bill through the upper House ; but, although the eyes of the duke's friends were fixed encouragingly and anxiously upon him, and notwithstanding Lord Malmesbury, who sat by his side, repeatedly urged him to rise, though it were only to utter a few words, he remained motionless and speechless as a statue. "Lord Loughborough," writes Lord Malmesbury, "answered in one of the finest speeches possible, but the Duke of Portland, to the great concern and grief of his friends, did not say a word." That same day, Lord Malmesbury happened to dine *tête-à-tête* with the duke. "I had not the heart or courage," he writes, "to talk to him on the subject. I perceived how greatly he felt embarrassed, and could not bring myself to distress him more by telling him how unfairly he had disappointed his friends, and how much he had committed me by authorising me to say he certainly would speak. He was so very uncomfortable that it would have been cruel to have plagued him, and although he saw, by my silence and manner, how much hurt and afflicted I was at his having done nothing, yet I saved him the humiliation of making him confess his own weakness. Fox came in about half-past ten. The duke kept him waiting as long as I stayed."

In consequence of this prolonged and lamentable vacillation on the part of the Duke of Portland, his friends—hopeless, apparently, of being able to act with him—resolved to act without

him. To Lord Auckland, Lord Sheffield writes on the 5th of February, 1793: "I had nothing particular to say, neither have I now, except that opposition, as lately called, seems suspended in a comical state, the Duke of Portland adhering to Charles Fox, and all the party, except a very select few, opposing the said Charles." No further time was now lost in making terms with Mr. Pitt. Of the leading Whigs, one of the first to abandon the standard of Fox was the Prince of Wales, who not only sent a written intimation to the Duke of Portland of his intention "to join government," but, in his place in the House of Lords, declared his secession from the principles of which his "dear Charles" was the uncompromising advocate. Pitt and his new friends were no long time in coming to an understanding. The Great Seal, which had been in commission since the dismissal of Thurlow, was conferred upon Lord Loughborough. In the following year, Earl Fitzwilliam was appointed president of the Council; Earl Spencer became lord privy seal; Lord Porchester, who had formerly declined joining the society of the "Friends of the People" because it was not sufficiently republican for him,¹

¹ "In a few months," writes Lord Holland, "he publicly arraigned it as seditious, and obtained the Earldom of Carnarvon; on which Mr. Fox pleasantly observed, that he was right in saying that the association was not so republican as he wished, as, if it had been, he would probably have got a marquissate."

was created Earl of Carnarvon; while to Burke, at the express suggestion, it is said, of the king, was awarded a pension of £1,200 a year out of the civil list, and afterward a further allowance of £2,500 a year from the Four-and-a-half per Cent. Fund. Neither did any great length of time elapse before the Duke of Portland recovered from his irresolution. His Grace, who, when Lord Loughborough accepted the Great Seal, had been the first to hold him up to reprobation, now submitted — to use Lord Holland's words — “to humiliations infinitely more disgraceful” by accepting from the hands of his rival Pitt the post of secretary of state for the Home Department and the Order of the Garter. “Are you not afraid of being outvoted in your own Cabinet?” inquired Speaker Addington of Mr. Pitt. “No,” was the answer; “I am under no anxiety on that account. I place much dependence on my new colleagues, and I place still more dependence on myself.”

Thus, in consequence of the defection of the aristocratic section of the Whig party, were Fox and a few ardent associates left, unsupported by wealth and power, to fight by themselves the battle of the people. Thus, to use the words of Earl Russell — “his party broken, his popularity gone, his friends deserting him, his eloquence useless, his name held up to detestation” — was this gifted and once idolised statesman left almost alone to bear “aloft the standard of Whiggism

amid the attacks of his enemies and the desertion of his followers." "Mr. Fox is left alone," writes Storer to Lord Auckland, on the 11th of January, 1793, "or at least with a poor epitome of his former followers. Opposition, in a word, is shivered to pieces." "Charles Fox," observed a lady of great sagacity, "is a very clever and highly gifted man, but he has never discovered the great secret that John Bull is a Tory by nature."

That the great Whig phalanx should be broken up without giving rise to bitter recriminations and painful charges and countercharges amongst former personal as well as political friends, was scarcely to be expected. On the one hand, Fox, and his small band of political followers, charged the seceding Whigs with being traitors to the great cause, and to the great party which had advocated liberal and constitutional principles since the year 1688. So far, they insisted, from their entertaining the slightest intention to subvert monarchy and religion, their doctrines were identical with those which, one hundred years previously, had been advocated by Locke in defence of the title of William of Orange to the throne. Ridiculing the notion that either the country or the Constitution was in danger, they continued to insist, not only that the prevailing alarm had been artfully fomented, if not generated, by ministers and their friends, but that the aristocratic section of the Whigs had, by joining in that alarm, enabled

the government to enact those arbitrary coercive restrictions on the liberty of the subject, which, without Whig support, it would never have been in their power to carry through Parliament. Certainly, if we may judge from the private correspondence of the period, there was no want of loyalty in England at this time, nor was admiration of French principles so deeply rooted, or so widely spread, as the alarmists would have had the world believe. "The late horrors in France," writes Mr. J. Bland Burges to Lord Auckland, "have at least been attended with one good consequence, for they have turned the tide of general opinions here very suddenly. French principles and even French men are daily becoming more unpopular." In like language of confidence, the Archbishop of Canterbury writes to Lord Auckland: "You will have observed, since my last, indications in abundance, firm and decisive, of the increased loyalty and zeal of this country in support of the king and Constitution. It pervades the country to such a degree that whatever there is of a different sort in the kingdom is silent and concealed, and, I am persuaded, it is of a very small extent, comparatively speaking." "'The Constitution,'" writes Lord Sheffield, "most fortunately is become the word, and it is as much a favourite as 'Liberty, Property, and No Excise,' or any other word ever was."

In the meantime, while one section of the

Liberal party was charging the other with Toryism and timidity, the other and more conservative section had not been backward in laying the whole blame of their separation upon Fox and his friends. By their democratic language, argued the seceders, they had led the country to the verge of revolution. By their unseasonable advocacy of parliamentary reform they had alarmed the friends of moderate liberty, and thus had done more harm than good to the cause in which each and all of them had been interested. But — as may readily be imagined — it was upon Fox personally that their anathemas principally descended. "How entirely," writes Lord Malmesbury, "he has broken up the party! How much he has made his best friends, and those toward whom he had obligations of the deepest nature, partakers of the consequences of his ill-judged conduct!" "The extravagance of Charles Fox," writes Lord Sheffield, "has broken every party tie;" and again Storer writes to Lord Auckland: "His Most Christian Majesty, alas! who has lost his head, is not now more to be pitied than Charles, who remains a head forsaken and alone. Opposition is splintered into a thousand pieces, and 'God Save the King' is so much the prevailing tune, that even the dances at the opera are composed to the loyal air, and 'King and Constitution' figures in the heads and caps of our well-dressed ladies."

The great Whig party was indeed broken up. When, some forty years afterward, a dinner was given to the venerable member for Middlesex, George Byng, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of his having sat in Parliament for that county, he alluded with much pleasantry to the state of the Whig party in his youth. "It has been asserted," he said, "that the Whigs would all have been held in one hackney-coach. This is a calumny. We should have filled two." So also Lord Bexley wrote to Dean Pellew: "You may judge of their numbers by the circumstance that they generally went home to dinner with Tyrwhitt Jones in his coach." According to Lord Sheffield, the party was reduced to "Grey's reformers," and to half a dozen wrong-headed men, who always took the strange side of a question."

Fox's separation from his political friends not only sadly ruffled his naturally even and forgiving temper, but was the occasion, apparently, of his committing extravagancies, which in his more reasonable moments he probably regretted. "There is no address at this moment," he one day exclaimed, with an oath, "which Pitt could frame, that I would not propose an amendment to and divide the House upon." The political sentiments which he expressed, not only in public, but among his personal friends, certainly bordered on republicanism. "On Friday night," writes Lord Sheffield, "Charles told us distinctly that the sovereignty

was absolutely in the people ; that the monarchy was elective, — otherwise the dynasty of Brunswick had no right, — and that when a majority of the people thought another kind of government preferable, they undoubtedly had a right to cashier the king." Again, Lord Malmesbury writes: "His principles bore the strongest marks of a leaning toward republicanism, and he expressed them almost as strongly to us collectively as he had done before to me alone when at St. Anne's Hill, and in St. James's Square." On one occasion we find him emphatically drinking to the "majesty of the people," and on another occasion holding such violent democratic language at a loyal association in St. George's parish, that he was very nearly being thrust out of the room. "A sensible man who sat next to him," writes the Archbishop of Canterbury, "assured me of this ; and that from the compression of his teeth, in order to conceal his agitation, his cheeks shook as if he was under a fit of an ague."

Although the king had reason enough to be incensed at Fox's conduct at this period, still it was not till a later date that he adopted the summary step of erasing his name from the list of Privy Councillors. The following curious memoranda are transcribed from the MS. books in the Privy Council office :

"ST. JAMES'S, 9th May, 1798.

"This day his Majesty in Council, having ordered the Council book to be laid before him, the name

of the Hon. Charles James Fox was erased from the list of Privy Councillors."

In the MS. nominal list of Privy Councillors, the stroke of a pen runs through the name of Charles Fox, against which are the following words in the handwriting of the clerk of the Council :

"Struck out by his Majesty in Council with his own hand, on the 9th of May, 1798.

"W. FAULKNER."

The immediate occasion of the king's anger is supposed to have been a democratic toast proposed by Fox at a dinner at the Whig Club, "To the sovereignty of the people of Great Britain."¹

Great Britain was now on eve of the longest, the most expensive, and most sanguinary war, in which it has ever been her evil fortune to be engaged. It has frequently been asserted that Mr. Pitt was the cause of that war, but, we believe, with great injustice. On the contrary, he seems not only to have earnestly desired peace,

¹ "An error of fatal influence upon the opposition party," writes Francis Horner, "was the countenance given to the Jacobin party in England by Mr. Fox. He was misled in this by some people about him, and by the persuasion, no doubt, that the powerful [Whig] party might easily be restrained from excess, and in the meantime give effectual aid to the prevalence of popular sentiments." As Horner very justly observes, Fox "felt too much and reflected too little."

but to have done his utmost to prevent other European powers declaring war, and lastly, when war between France and the German powers subsequently became inevitable, to have made every exertion to prevent Great Britain being entangled in the contest. His wish was, as expressed by himself in a letter to the Marquis of Stafford, to leave France "to arrange its own internal affairs as it can." In fact, not only does Mr. Pitt's language in the House of Commons repeatedly demonstrate that, so far from desiring war, he regarded it as an improbable event, but all his favourite measures of finance and economy, all his projects for the advancement of commerce and for the reduction of taxation, were founded on the basis and expectation of a permanent peace. "No man," said William Grenville to Mr. Rogers, "could wish more to preserve peace with France. His heart was set upon peace, and upon financial improvements. The war was forced upon him."

But, while we freely admit that Mr. Pitt was anxious to avert the horrors of war from his country, it may be questioned whether, by the exercise of greater foresight and prudence, and by the adoption of a more conciliatory tone toward the French Republic, he might not have long retarded, or possibly have prevented altogether, those terrible hostilities, which lasted for nearly a decade after the great minister had been laid in the tomb in Westminster Abbey. "Though," writes his

friend Wilberforce, "at the commencement of the war, I could deliberately declare that we were not the assailants, and therefore that it was just and necessary, yet I had but too much reason to know that the ministry had not taken due pains to prevent its breaking out." At all events, having once conceded the grand principle that every country has a right to manage its own domestic affairs in its own way, it became only a part of his ordinary duty to exercise, in his dealings with France, that tact and discretion which afforded the best prospect of averting the great evil which he admittedly deprecated and dreaded. On the contrary, by his churlish reception of the friendly and pacific assurances made to England by the French nation ; by the lofty assumption of superiority with which he exhorted France "to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandisement, and to confine herself within her own territory ;" by his dismissal of M. Chauvelin from London ; by his recall of Lord Gower from Paris after the execution of Louis the Sixteenth ; and lastly, by the refusal of England to receive an accredited minister from the convention, notwithstanding Spain, closely allied as she was to the murdered Louis, had set the example, he not only alarmed and irritated the French people, but seems to have impressed their rulers with the fatal conviction that, in declaring war against Great Britain, they were merely anticipating the intentions of the British

Cabinet. "It is with regret," wrote the French government, "we shall combat the English, whom we esteem, but we shall combat them without fear."¹

Notwithstanding the brilliant abilities displayed by Mr. Pitt as a peace minister, his capacity to conduct a great war, and to guide the helm of government in tempestuous times, has been frequently, and with much severity, called in question. The abstract fact that Mr. Pitt, during the long years of disgrace and disaster which followed the

¹ "Our government," writes Wilberforce, "had been, for some months before the breaking out of the war, negotiating with the principal European powers, for the purpose of obtaining a joint representation to France, assuring her that if she would formally engage to keep within her limits, and not molest her neighbours, she should be suffered to settle her own internal government without interference. I never was so earnest with Mr. Pitt on any occasion as I was in my entreaties, before the war broke out, that he would declare openly in the House of Commons that he had been, and then was, negotiating this treaty. I urged on him that the declaration might possibly produce an immediate effect in France, where it was manifest there prevailed an opinion that we were meditating some interference with their internal affairs, and the restoration of Louis to his throne. At all events, I hoped that in the first lucid interval France would see how little reason there was for continuing the war with Great Britain; and, at least, the declaration must silence all but the most determined oppositionists in this country. How far this expectation would have been realised, you may estimate by Mr. Fox's language, when Mr. Pitt, at my instance, did make the declaration last winter, — 1799. 'If,' he said, 'the right honourable gentleman had made the declaration, now delivered, to France, as well as to Russia, Austria, and Prussia, I should have nothing more to say or desire.'"

breaking out of the war with France, ardently and laboriously devoted all the energies of his mind and body to the service of his country, few will do him the injustice to deny. But unfortunately Mr. Pitt laboured under disadvantages, which not all the best intentions in the world, nor the most laborious industry, were sufficient to counteract. It will be remembered at how unripe an age, owing to precocious talents and other causes, he had been promoted from the lecture-room of the university to the first seat at the treasury board. Since that period his time had been occupied, not in framing complicated treaties and organising great military expeditions, but in the more congenial capacity of reducing taxation, of improving the revenue, securing parliamentary triumphs, and carrying successful budgets through Parliament. Moreover, there were other deficiencies which he had to contend against. Owing to the delicacy of his constitution, he had been brought up at home, and thus had had little opportunity of acquiring that desirable knowledge of human nature and of the world which an education at a public school is calculated to impart. He had no knowledge of any modern language but the French, which he knew but imperfectly, and consequently had been afforded but few occasions of conversing freely and advantageously with the discerning and sagacious men of other countries. Never, but on one occasion, having crossed the British Channel, and then merely on a vacation

trip, his powerful mind had acquired no enlightenment from foreign travel. It was, in fact, his misfortune, as we find subscribed severally by Lord Malmesbury and Mr. Windham, that "he was not sufficiently acquainted with mankind; had not mixed enough in the world." Possibly, it may have been mainly owing to these defects that, on the breaking out of the French Revolution we find him strangely insensible to the signs and perils of the times; incapable, apparently, of appreciating the vast resources and military greatness of the French nation; and consequently, instead of anticipating and preparing for a state of war, plunging into the opposite extreme of reducing the military establishments of the country, with all the self-satisfied complacency of a commonplace financier. The fact is a notorious one that, so late as the month of February, 1792, he unhesitatingly expressed his conviction in Parliament, that "unquestionably there never was a time in the history of this country, when, from the situation of Europe, we might more reasonably expect fifteen years of peace than at the present moment." In like manner, when war had become inevitable, he pointed with his accustomed confidence to the exhausted state of the French finances, arguing, from this very inconclusive fact, that the contest must necessarily be a brief and inconsiderable one. Again, when more far-sighted persons than himself sought to wean him from his delusion, it was not without

impatience, we are told, that he listened to their arguments. "It will be a very short war," he once observed, "and certainly be ended in one or two campaigns." "No, sir," were the words of Burke, when this argument was repeated to him, "it will be a long war and a dangerous war, but it must be undertaken." Burke's prediction proved correct. Before a twelvemonth had elapsed, more than a million of enthusiastic Frenchmen, the most formidable military people in Europe, are computed to have rushed to arms. "Good God! my dear lord," writes Lord Stanhope to one of the ministers, Lord Grenville, "you have no conception of the misfortunes you may bring upon England by going to war with France. For as to France, I believe all Europe cannot subdue them, whatever efforts may be made. It will only rouse them more." Another keen-sighted person, to whose representations Mr. Pitt turned a deaf ear, was M. Bigot de St. Croix, formerly minister for foreign affairs in France. When the English minister endeavoured to show him the impossibility of France being able to carry on the war for more than six months, "Sir," he replied, "if you knew the resources of France as well as I know them, you would know that she is capable of carrying on war for a great length of time. Sir, France is more powerful because she has not what you call finances. Those who are in possession of the government will put all property in requisition." So

unpalatable was this language to Mr. Pitt, that from that hour the Frenchman never called upon him but he found the door of the minister's house closed against him.¹

It has been asserted, to the prejudice of George the Third, that the war with France was "highly acceptable" to his feelings. On the contrary, he was unquestionably most anxious to preserve peace, nor was it till the fears and disgust of Whig, as well as Tory, had been thoroughly aroused, by the atrocities committed by the French people, by their renunciation of Christianity, and by the decapita-

¹ It must be admitted, in justice to Mr. Pitt's sagacity, that he was far from being the only leading politician of the day who had adopted this short-sighted view of the power and resources of France. In the debate on the army estimates on the 9th of February, 1790, we find Burke describing France as, in a "political light," "expunged out of the system of Europe." "The French," writes Lord Grenville, "will not for many years be in a situation to molest the invaluable peace which we now enjoy." It was also the opinion of Lord Sheffield, so late as October, 1792, that "France would hardly venture to come to an open quarrel with us, and if they did, there would be a complete opportunity of annihilating their marine and colonies." Indeed, even at a still later period, when war had actually broken out, we find Lord Auckland predicting that "France will soon cease to be an object of alarm to other nations, and will sink within herself into an abyss of horrors of every kind, — famine, civil war, rapine, massacres, and ultimately a separation of governments and various dismemberments." Yet, before long, not only had the English army, to use Lord Macaulay's words, become "the laughing-stock of all Europe," but, before many years elapsed, the genius of France had stamped her foot upon the fallen thrones of most of the ancient sovereignties of Europe.

tion of their sovereign, that the king was reluctantly induced to join in the almost general desire for a crusade on behalf of religion, property, and order.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

“WINDSOR, Feb. 2, 1793.

“On returning from hunting I have found Mr. Pitt’s note, by which I learn that Lord Beauchamp seconded the motion for an address, which was only opposed by Lord Wycombe, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Fox, and Lord William Russell. The impression of the House seems just what could have been expected; for if the occasion ever could occur that every power, for the preservation of society, must stand forth in opposition to France, the necessity seems to be at the present hour. Indeed, my natural sentiments are so strong for peace, that no event of less moment than the present could have made me decidedly of opinion that duty, as well as interest, calls on us to join against that most savage as well as unprincipled nation.

“G. R.”

The “event” to which the king alludes with so much indignation was doubtless the execution of his brother monarch, which had taken place not many days previously to the date of this letter. The king had very naturally deeply interested himself in the misfortunes of the royal family of

France, and especially in the inhuman sufferings to which they had been subjected in the Temple. Thus, when the Countess of Sutherland, on her return from Paris, recounted to him some of the details of that terrible duration, — for instance, how she had contrived to convey some of her own garments to the once regal, beautiful, and half-worshipped Marie Antoinette, and some of her children's clothes to the innocent dauphin, — the king is said to have been so affected as to shed tears.

The commencement of the long sanguinary and senseless hostilities which followed, bears date from the 1st of February, 1793, the day on which France formally declared war against Great Britain and the United Provinces. On the 11th, a message from the king announced the fact to Parliament, and on the 26th, three battalions of the guards, having been previously reviewed by the king on the Parade in St. James's Park, embarked at Greenwich for Holland, their Majesties, with their sons and daughters, being present to witness their departure. As the boats severally pushed off from the riverside under the shadow of the noble, palatial Hospital, the farewell huzzas of the soldiers were responded to by the cheers of the vast crowds on shore; the king remaining with his head uncovered, and the queen and the princesses waving their handkerchiefs.

CHAPTER XIII.

Illegal Marriage of the Duke of Sussex — Lord Howe's Great Naval Victory of the 1st of June — The King's Congratulatory Letters on the Subject to the Howe Family — Recall of the Duke of York from the Command of the Army in the Netherlands — Marriage of the Prince of Wales — The King Assailed by a Mob on His Way to and from Parliament — His Popularity with the Middle Classes — Birth of the Princess Charlotte of Wales — The King at Eton Montem — Court Scene on the Terrace at Windsor — Marriage of the Duke of York.

THE only event of any particular interest in the domestic history of George the Third, during the year 1793, was the marriage at Rome, on the 4th of April, of his sixth son, the Duke of Sussex, — then a youth in his twenty-first year — with Lady Augusta Murray, daughter of John, fourth Earl of Dunmore, a lady some years older than himself; the marriage ceremony being subsequently repeated on the 5th of December, in St. George's Church, Hanover Square, London. This imprudent and illegal match could scarcely fail to be most displeasing to the king, by whose command evidences of the double union were subsequently laid before the ecclesiastical courts, when both marriages were declared to be contrary to

the provisions of the Royal Marriage Act, and consequently null and void.¹ "A council," writes Lord Auckland to Lord Henry Spencer, on the 27th of January, 1794, "sits both to-day and to-morrow, to examine the circumstances of Prince Augustus's marriage, and to make a report to the king. Lady Dunmore and others have been examined. The parties were disguised at the ceremony, and the parson does not appear to have known them. The ceremony was on the 5th of December, and the lady was delivered of a boy on the 13th instant."² The fact is a remarkable one, that, although the marriage at St. George's was published by banns, and although the duke and the lady were respectively married by their real names, Augustus Frederick and Augusta Murray, yet neither the rector nor any of his subordinates seem to have entertained the slightest suspicion of their real rank and position. So improbable, however, did it seem, that one and all of those present should have been ignorant of the truth, that, when the affair came to be investigated by the Privy Council, Lord Thurlow denounced their conduct in almost violent language. "Sir," he said, angrily, to Lord Eldon, then attorney-general, "why have you not prose-

¹ Lady Augusta, who assumed, by sign manual, the name of D'Ameland, died at Rome in 1830.

² The child here referred to was the late Sir Augustus Frederick D'Este, K. C. H.

cuted, under the act of Parliament, all the parties concerned in this abominable marriage?" Happily the attorney-general was ready with a complete reply. "I answered," he writes, "that it was a very difficult business to prosecute; that the act, it was understood, had been drawn by Lord Mansfield, Mr. Attorney-General Thurlow, and Mr. Solicitor-General Wedderburn, who unluckily had made all parties present at the marriage guilty of felony; and as nobody could prove the marriage except a person who had been present at it, there could be no prosecution, because nobody present could be compelled to be a witness. This put an end to the matter."

The year 1794 was remarkable for the great naval victory obtained by the king's favourite admiral, Lord Howe, on the 1st of June, over the French fleet. On the glorious tidings being communicated to the king, he wrote the following letters :

The King to Countess Howe.

"WINDSOR, June 11, 1794.

"Lady Howe will, I trust, believe that, next to the signal advantage to the great cause in which this country is engaged, nothing can give me more satisfaction than that it has been obtained by the skill and bravery of Earl Howe, and, I sincerely return thanks to the Almighty, without any personal loss to himself. The 1st of June must be

reckoned as a proud day for him, as it will carry down his name to the latest posterity. I will not add more than that I trust now both your mind, and that of Lady Mary, will be at ease. We must soon hear of his return to Spithead.

“GEORGE R.”

*The King to the Honourable Mrs. Howe.*¹

“WINDSOR, JUNE 11, 1794.

“Mrs. Howe’s zeal for the great cause in which this country is engaged, added to her becoming ardour for the glory of her family, must make her feel with redoubled joy the glorious news brought by Sir Roger Curtis. She will, I hope, be satisfied now that Earl Richard has, with twenty-five sail of the line, attacked twenty-six of the enemy, taken six, and sunk two.² Besides, it is not improbable that some of the disabled ships of the enemy may not be able to reach their own shore. I own I could not refrain from expressing my sentiments on the occasion, but will not detain her by adding more.

GEORGE R.”

On the 13th of June, Portsmouth witnessed the unusual and heart-stirring sight of a victorious fleet arriving at Spithead, with no fewer than six of the

¹ Sister to Lord Howe.

² This is not quite correct. Lord Howe captured seven French line-of-battle ships, of which one, the *Vengeur*, seventy-four guns, sank almost immediately.

enemy's line-of-battle ships in tow. On the 26th, the king, accompanied by the queen, the three youngest princesses, and Prince Ernest, afterward King of Hanover, proceeded to Portsmouth to do honour to his favourite admiral. His visit to the earl's flag-ship, the *Queen Charlotte*, accompanied by his officers of state and by the officers of the fleet, afforded a most interesting sight. On the quarter-deck he presented Lord Howe with a valuable diamond-hilted sword and a gold chain, to which a medal, struck for the occasion, was subsequently appended. "Sir Roger Curtis,"¹ writes the earl's second daughter, Lady Mary Howe, to her sister, Lady Altamont, "received the king and led him immediately upon deck. Our attendance on the queen and princesses prevented mama and I from seeing the first meeting of the king and my glorious father, which I am told was the most affecting thing possible. My father's knees trembled with emotion when he kissed the king's hands, who presented him with a most magnificent sword set with diamonds, and afterward with a gold chain, to which is to be hung a gold medal struck for the occasion, which is also given to the other admirals and captains who have contributed to this victory, considered as the greatest ever obtained on the sea. My father afterward kissed the queen's hands, and

¹ Sir Roger Curtis, Bart., Earl Howe's flag captain in the great battle of the 1st of June, died an Admiral of the Red in November, 1816.

then his flag was lowered, and the royal standard raised to the maintopmast's head and saluted by the whole fleet. The royal family then went into the cabin, and appeared happy and comfortable to the highest degree, giving us a thousand proofs of the kindest interest. About three o'clock they went to dinner, after which the king gave a toast, drank by all at the table, the princesses, the prince, Lady Courtown, Lady Caroline Waldegrave, Lady Frances Howard, mama, and I; my father waiting on the king and queen; and this toast was pronounced in the most solemn manner: 'May her great admiral long command the *Queen Charlotte*, and may she long be an example to future fleets!' A short time after this, the whole royal family walked through the ship's company, drawn up in line, when my father told the king aloud, that 'their diligence and propriety of conduct, in all respects, since the victory, was not less commendable than their resolution and bravery during the action.' Nothing, during the day, was more pleasing to me than this walk through these brave fellows, every one of whom, I am certain, would attend my father to a cannon's mouth, and all of whom have exposed their lives for him."

On quitting the *Queen Charlotte*, the royal party, with Lord Howe leading the way in his barge, were rowed up Portsmouth Harbour to inspect the French prizes. During the four days that the king and queen remained at Portsmouth, they occupied

much of their time in visiting the dockyard and the ships-of-war at Spithead, and on Sunday, the last day of their stay, attended divine service in Portsmouth church. On the Monday they embarked on board the *Aquilon* frigate, which carried them to Southampton, from which town they proceeded to Windsor.

It may be mentioned that on reaching Windsor the queen had the misfortune of hearing of the death of her brother, Adolphus Frederick, Duke of Mecklenburgh-Strelitz, and further, that, before the court had gone out of mourning, died her sister, the Princess Christina.

The death of the Duke of Mecklenburgh-Strelitz created a vacancy for the Order of the Garter, which the king, on the one hand, was anxious to confer upon Lord Howe, but which, to his infinite annoyance, Mr. Pitt showed no less eagerness to obtain for his new ally, the Duke of Portland. "If Mr. Pitt," writes the king to his minister, on the 13th of July, "can find that a marquisate would be as agreeable to Lord Howe as a Garter, I will consent to it. But having with Mr. Pitt's knowledge acquainted Lord Howe with my intention of conferring the Order on him, it is impossible, unless Lord Howe chooses the former mark of favour in preference to the latter, that I can propose it. Besides, I cannot see why, on the Duke of Portland's head favours are to be heaped without measure." Mr. Pitt, however, proved inexorable,

and accordingly the king was compelled to submit. The vacant Garter was bestowed on the Whig duke, nor was it till nearly three years afterward that the victor of the 1st of June, who had chosen to decline the marquissate, received the more coveted distinction.

To the circumstance of Lord Howe's health failing him in the winter of 1794-95, and again in the ensuing summer, we are indebted for the following pleasing letters, addressed by George the Third to the noble admiral :

The King to Earl Howe.

“WINDSOR, January 7, 1795.

“The habitude I have had, of not only looking on Earl Howe as one of the first of admirals, but as my peculiar admiral, inclines me on the present occasion to write to him, having heard from Earl Spencer on Friday that Earl Howe doubts much whether his health would enable him soon to join the fleet. I should sooner have wrote to him, had I not heard, on coming here, that his fever had returned. I therefore thought it would have been unkind at that time to be troubling him, and consequently delayed it till now, that I trust his health is much improved.

“I know too much the value of Earl Howe's services to be inclined to call for them in the present inclement season ; and, therefore, I am desirous to have it understood that I wish he should

remain at home to reinstate his health for the more favourable season, and that one of the senior officers under his command may go out, with such ships as can be put to sea, to protect the transports and trade now ready to proceed to foreign stations; Earl Howe remaining at hand to give his advice as occurrences may arise, and to return to the fleet, as I have said before, when the season may be more temperate. I press this the stronger, from recollecting the hint dropped at Portsmouth in June, of doubting how long his health might permit him to continue to serve.

"I know Earl Howe's attachment to my person as well as to the service, and, therefore, point out to him that his forming any idea of retreat at present would be highly detrimental to me, and, at an hour when some show a timidity, very fatal to the great cause in which I am engaged. Any failure from him, who I think a sheet-anchor, would be the cause of more evil than I choose to express.

"GEORGE R."

The King to Earl Howe.

"WINDSOR, July 26, 1795.

"I received this morning Earl Howe's letter, notifying that the weakness, consequent to his late indisposition, must oblige him to apply to the Board of Admiralty for leave further to postpone the engagement he is called upon to resume in the charge of the fleet. I cannot but sincerely regret that he

is under that necessity, but trust he will soon be enabled to resume a command he has so ably and successfully filled ; and I must in the strongest manner press him to pursue such means, as by his medical advisers may be advised, to restore his strength, that the country may have again the pleasure of seeing him in the station I am certain no one can so ably fill.

“GEORGE R.”

The ill success which attended the British arms in the Netherlands, and, more recently, the disastrous retreat of the army, under the command of the Duke of York, were attributed by Mr. Pitt, whether with justice or not, chiefly to the youth and military inexperience of his Royal Highness, and to the want of confidence felt by the army in “his general management.” Accordingly he considered it to be his duty—a most painful one doubtless—to press upon the king the recall of his favourite and certainly gallant son. Mr. Pitt’s letter to his sovereign has apparently not been preserved ; but the following is the king’s distressing reply to his minister :

The King to Mr. Pitt.

“WINDSOR, NOV. 24, 1794.

“Mr. Pitt cannot be surprised at my being very much hurt at the contents of his letter. Indeed, he seems to expect it, but I am certain that noth-

ing but the thinking it his duty could have instigated him to give me so severe a blow. I am neither in a situation of mind, nor from inclination, inclined to enter more minutely into every part of his letter; but I am fully ready to answer the material part, namely, that though loving very much my son, and not forgetting how he saved the Republic of Holland in 1793, and that his endeavours to be of service have never abated, and that to the conduct of Austria, the faithlessness of Prussia, and the cowardice of the Dutch, every failure is easily to be accounted for, without laying blame on him who deserved a better fate, I shall certainly now not think it safe for him to continue in the command on the Continent, when every one seems to conspire to render his situation hazardous, by either propagating unfounded complaints against him, or giving credit to them.

“ No one will believe that I take this step but reluctantly, and the more so since no successor of note is proposed to take the command. Truly, I do not see where any one is to be found that can deserve that name now the Duke of Brunswick has declined; and I am certain he will fully feel the propriety of the resolution he has taken, when he finds that even a son of mine cannot withstand the torrent of abuse.”

The Duke of York was accordingly recalled to England. He arrived at Harwich on the 22d of

January following, and in less than three weeks was advanced to the rank of field-marshal, and appointed commander-in-chief of his Majesty's land forces.

There were few events, during the reign of George the Third, which afforded greater satisfaction, alike to the king and to his subjects, than the tardy consent of the Prince of Wales to enter into the marriage state, and the announcement of his appointed nuptials with the Princess Caroline of Brunswick. To the prince alone, the prospect was not only an unpalatable, but a hateful one. As the husband, in the eyes of heaven, of Mrs. Fitzherbert, and also with his passions, if not his affections, fixed upon another woman, Lady Jersey, it was natural that he should shrink from contracting a third engagement, which promised to cast no single ray of happiness on the future. Necessity, however, in his case acknowledged no law. The prince had unhappily broken through the engagement, which he made to Parliament in 1787, to limit his expenditure for the future. His debts had again become enormous. His creditors were daily growing more and more importunate, and accordingly his only means of extricating himself from his embarrassments was by marrying, and thus affording a reasonable prospect to the country of his becoming the father of future heirs to the throne. It was on these grounds that Parliament subsequently discharged his debts to the almost fabulous

amount of nearly £650,000, an act of costly munificence which the prince repaid by limiting his matrimonial cohabitation to a period so brief that it was an insult to the friendless foreigner to whom he had pledged his troth, and which limited the issue of their union to an only child, the late Princess Charlotte of Wales.

So long as a princess was brought to the prince at the altar, or rather so long as his debts were paid, his Royal Highness would seem to have taken but little interest in the selection of his future consort. As the king, therefore, was known to prefer the daughter of his favourite sister, the Duchess of Brunswick, and as the Duke of Clarence had represented the young lady in no unfavourable colours to the prince, it was no great sacrifice to parental duty when he proposed to marry his ill-starred cousin.

The King to Mr. Pitt.

“WEYMOUTH, Aug. 24, 1794.

“Agreeable to what I mentioned to Mr. Pitt before I came here, I have this morning seen the Prince of Wales, who has acquainted me with his having broken off all connection with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and his desire of entering into a more creditable line of life by marrying; expressing at the same time that his wish is that my niece, the Princess of Brunswick, may be the person. Undoubtedly she is the person who naturally must be

most agreeable to me. I expressed my approbation of the idea, provided his plan was to lead a life that would make him appear respectable, and consequently render the princess happy. He assured me that he perfectly coincided with me in opinion. I then said that till Parliament assembled no arrangement could be taken except my sounding my sister, that no idea of any other marriage may be encouraged. G. R."

The person who was selected to proceed to Brunswick to demand the hand of the Princess Caroline for the heir of England, was the accomplished diplomatist, James, Earl of Malmesbury, from whose diaries we learn that he arrived at the court of Brunswick on Thursday, the 20th of November, 1794, and that on the same day he was introduced to the future Queen of England, then in the twenty-seventh year of her age. "The Princess Caroline," he writes, "much embarrassed at my first being presented to her; pretty face; not expressive of softness; her figure not graceful; fine eyes, good hand, tolerable teeth, but going; fair hair and light eyebrows; good bust; short, with what the French call *les épaules impertinentes*; vastly happy with her future expectations." Whatever may have been the causes of the procrastination, the arrival of the princess in England was delayed till the 8th of April, on the evening of which day her marriage with the prince was solemn-

nised with considerable splendour in the Chapel Royal at St. James's Palace, the king giving away the bride, and the Archbishop of Canterbury performing the nuptial ceremony. Lord Malmesbury, who was present, incidentally mentions the prince delivering his hat, which was ornamented with a rich diamond button and loop, to Lord Harcourt to hold, and, after the ceremony, desiring his lordship to retain it as a marriage gift. According to Lord Malmesbury's further account, the prince not only had every appearance of being unhappy, but "had manifestly had recourse to wine or spirits," in order to keep up his courage.

It was not long after this period that the general disinclination to the ruinous war which was being waged with France, combined with a scarcity of food which amounted almost to a famine, not only occasioned serious discontent and formidable disorders in different parts of the kingdom, but led to two separate cowardly attacks being made on the person of the sovereign. The first of these outrages occurred on the 29th of October, 1795, the day on which the king proceeded in state to Westminster for the purpose of opening Parliament. By those whose memories carried them back many years, it was remarked that never, since the coronation, had denser crowds assembled in St. James's Park between Buckingham House and the Horse Guards, and between the Horse Guards and the precincts of the Houses of Parlia-

ment. The people, too, were evidently prepared for mischief. The Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Portland, and the Earl of Chatham were received with groans and hisses, which were redoubled when the cumbrous gilt state coach, containing the king and the Earls of Westmoreland and Onslow, made its appearance in the park. Seditious cries of "Bread! Bread! Peace! Peace! No king!" assailed the king's ears during the whole of his progress. Nevertheless, no violence was offered to his person till just when the royal coach entered the space between New and Old Palace Yard, when a small ball, either of lead or marble, perforated the glass window on the side on which he was seated, and then passed through the opposite window, which happened to be open. One of the two lords manifesting some alarm, he at once received a rebuke from the king. "Sit still, my lord," he said; "we must not betray fear, whatever happens." "We all," writes Lord Onslow, "instantly exclaimed, 'This is a shot!' The king showed, and I am persuaded felt, no alarm, much less fear, to which, indeed, he is insensible." His self-composure was complete. Instead of withdrawing to the back of the coach, in order to avoid the possible consequences of a second shot, he leaned forward and calmly examined the hole which had been made in the glass. "My lord, we have been shot at," was his quiet observation to the lord chancellor, who was expecting him

at the foot of the stairs leading to the House of Lords. Moreover, neither from his voice nor from his demeanour, as he delivered his speech from the throne, could any one have imagined that only a minute or two had elapsed since he had been providentially rescued from imminent peril. No less self-possessed was he when he retired with the Duke of York, and the lords in attendance, to the robing-room, where, in discussing the outrage, it was remarked that he betrayed less excitement than any one else. "Well, my lords," he said to Lords Westmoreland and Onslow, on reëntering the state coach, "one person is proposing this, and another is supposing that, forgetting that there is One above us all who disposes of everything, and on whom alone we depend."

Outrageous as had been the conduct of the mob during the king's progress to Westminster, still worse was the state of affairs on his return, more especially in St. James's Park. "The scene opened," writes Lord Onslow, "and the insulting abuse offered to his Majesty was what I can never think of but with horror, nor ever forget what I felt when they proceeded to throw stones into the coach, several of which hit the king, which he bore with signal patience, but not without sensible marks of indignation and resentment at the indignities offered to his person and office. The glasses were all broken to pieces, and in this situation we were during our passage through the park. The

king took one of the stones out of the cuff of his coat, where it had lodged, and gave it to me, saying, 'I make you a present of this, as a mark of the civilities we have met with on our journey to-day.'" At one time, the rabble pressed so closely and defiantly around the coach, that the king was forced to wave his hands to the horse-guards to keep the multitude at a greater distance. Observing one of the soldiers on the point of cutting down an innocent person, the king called out to him that he was mistaken, and thus saved the person's life.

From these disorders it might reasonably be inferred that the king's popularity had passed away, but such was not the case. His assailants, on the 29th of October, as we learn from Lord Onslow, were "all of the worst and lowest sort," whereas the mass of the middle and higher classes appear to have regarded him with the same affection and reverence as ever. When, on the following night, he attended the performances in Covent Garden Theatre with the queen and princesses, not only was his appearance greeted with a burst of enthusiastic congratulation, but, during the evening, "God Save the King" was three times called for by the audience. Occasionally, indeed, a hiss proceeded from some remote corner of the house; but the offender was speedily ejected.

The other attack which, about this time, was made on the king's person, occurred in Pall Mall

on the night of the 1st of February, on his return to Buckingham House from Drury Lane Theatre. Just as the carriage, in which the king and queen were seated, reached the corner of John Street, a stone was hurled through one of the glass windows, which, after having struck the queen in the cheek, fell into the lap of the lady of the bed-chamber in waiting, the Countess of Harrington. A reward of a thousand pounds was offered for the discovery of the miscreant who committed the outrage, but to no purpose. It may be mentioned that, at this period, so strong was the feeling of discontent among the lower orders of society, and so threatening was their attitude, that the king more than once told Lord Eldon that he considered it not improbable that he should be the last King of England.

On the 7th of January, 1796, nine calendar months, wanting one day, from the date of the marriage of the Prince and Princess of Wales, the princess gave birth at Carlton House to a daughter, who, four days afterward, was christened by the names of Charlotte Carolina Augusta; the Archbishop of Canterbury performing the ceremony, and the king, the queen, and the infant's grandmother, the Duchess of Brunswick, being its sponsors. It had been the hope of the well-wishers to the royal family, that so propitious an event as the birth of a child might put an end to the unhappy differences which existed between its

parents. Instead, however, of its being attended by this desirable result, scarcely three months elapsed before the royal couple had parted from each other, never again to meet on terms of social, and much less connubial kindliness. On this occasion the princess retired with her infant to a villa¹ in the fair village of Charlton, near Blackheath, while the prince lost no time in returning to his former allegiance to Mrs. Fitzherbert.

In the summer of this year we find the king attending the Eton Montem, and, as was usual with him on such gala-days, highly enjoying the spectacle of happy faces and gay costumes parading past him, and thoroughly identifying himself with the time-honoured amusements and ceremonies of the day. In the evening, at his kind and express request, the Eton boys, in their many-coloured dresses, were allowed to present themselves on the terrace at Windsor; thus establishing a pleasing precedent which grew into a custom that lasted, we believe, till the abolition of the ancient and interesting pageant.

George the Third, as we have already observed, seldom showed himself to greater advantage than when, with the queen leaning on his arm and their handsome family following them, he was to be seen, on a fine summer evening, promenading the noble terrace at Windsor, exchanging familiar signs

¹ Curiously enough, this house had formerly been the residence of the princess's rival, Mrs. Fitzherbert.

of recognition with one person, or stopping to inquire after the health and welfare of another. It was on one of these occasions that Miss Burney, now Madame D'Arblay, once more found herself conversing with her sovereign and former kind and indulgent master. It was her wish, she tells us, to display to her foreign husband the spectacle of a constitutional sovereign walking fearlessly and familiarly among his subjects, while the crowns of other European monarchs were tottering on their heads; nor, perhaps, was she without the natural desire of raising herself in the estimation of M. D'Arblay by showing him the friendly footing on which she stood with the royal family. On the present occasion of her visiting Windsor, although it was the month of July, the afternoon happened to be cold and raw, and accordingly, on her reaching the terrace with her husband, she found that, owing to the king not having made his appearance, the company were on the point of dispersing, and the musicians preparing to retreat with their instruments. Presently, however, it began to be buzzed among the crowd that the royal party were approaching, on which the horns and clarions were hastily summoned back, and in due time the king and the six princesses appeared in sight.

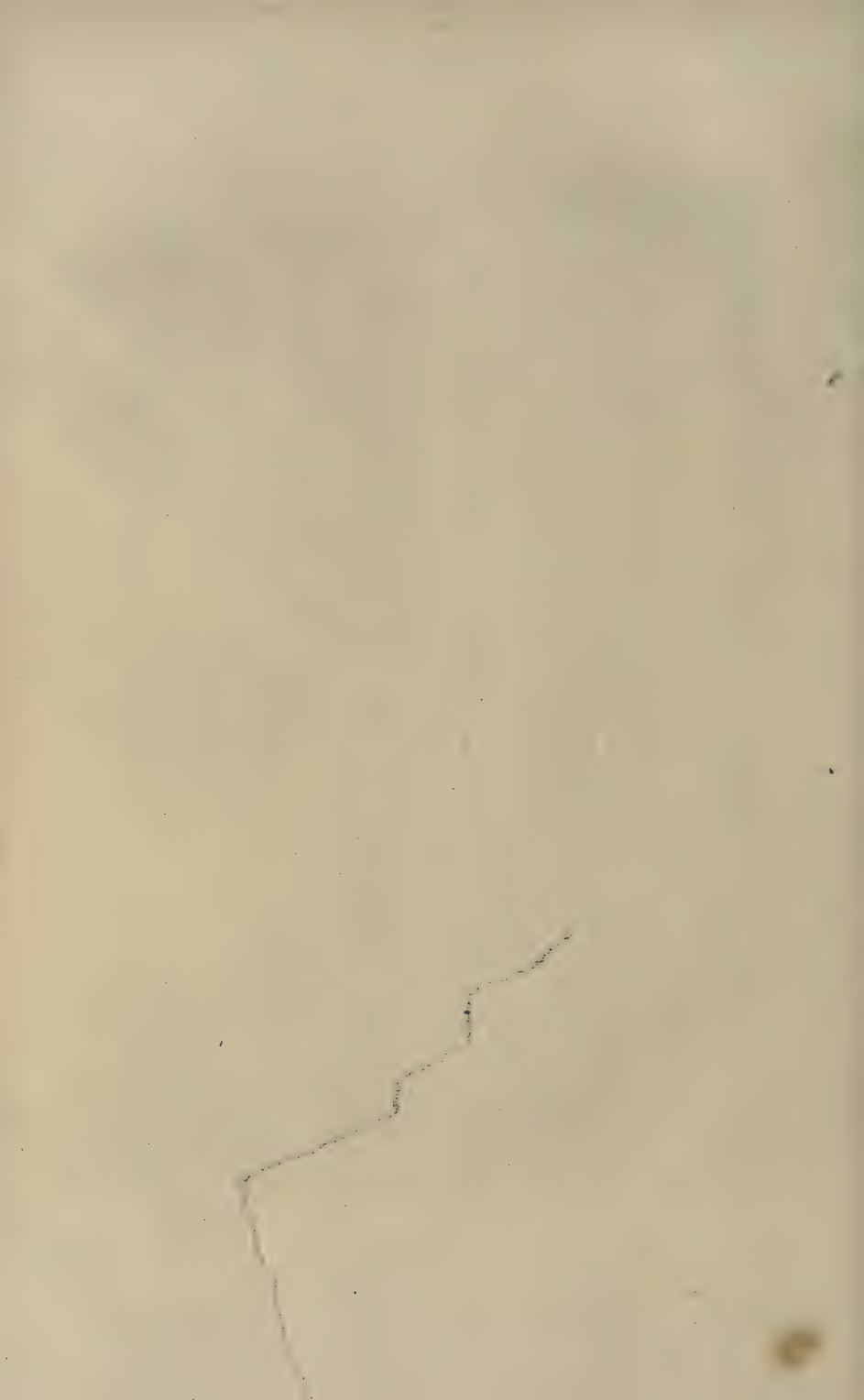
The king was attended by the Duke of York, the Lords Beaulieu and Walsingham, and General Harcourt. Lady Charlotte Bruce and Miss Goldsworthy were in waiting on the princesses. "The

king," writes Madame D'Arblay, "stopped to speak to the Bishop of Norwich and some others at the entrance, and then walked on toward us, who were at the farther end. As he approached, the Princess Royal said, loud enough to be heard by Mrs. Fisher, 'Madame D'Arblay, Sir.' Instantly he came on a step, and then stopped and addressed me, and, after a word or two of the weather, said, 'Is that M. D'Arblay?' and most graciously bowed to him and entered into a little conversation, demanding how long he had been in England, how long in the country, etc., with a sweetness, an air of wishing us well, that will never, never, be erased from our hearts." The king then passed on with the Duke of York, leaving the princesses to converse for a few moments with their old acquaintance. Madame D'Arblay, it should be observed, had just published her third novel, "Camilla," which the queen, departing from a general rule which she had laid down in regard to works of fiction, had permitted her daughters to read, without having in the first instance perused it herself. "I have got leave!" were the first joyous words of the Princess Elizabeth, to the delighted authoress. "Mamma says she will not wait to read it first." "After this," continues Madame D'Arblay, "the king and duke never passed without taking off their hats, and the princesses gave me a smile and a curtsy at every turn." In the course of the afternoon, the queen admitted her former servant



GEORGE III.
King of Great Britain &c.

W. B. & C. 1794



to an interview, at which the Duke of York was present, and, during a part of the time, the king, who was in high good humour, and who completed the satisfaction of Madame D'Arblay by directing much of the conversation to the subject of her new novel. "He talked," she writes, "much upon the book, and then of Mrs. Delany, and then of various others that my sight brought to his recollection, and all with a freedom and goodness that enabled me to answer without difficulty or embarrassment, and that produced two or three hearty laughs from the Duke of York." Madame D'Arblay mentions, as traits of kindly complaisance on the part of the young princesses, that on the king and queen quitting the apartment, the Princess Amelia lingered behind to shake hands with her, and that the Princess Augusta subsequently returned to the apartment for the same amiable purpose.¹

On the 18th of May, 1797, the marriage of the Princess Royal with Frederick Charles William, Hereditary Prince, and afterward King of Wurtem-

¹ One of the questions put by the king to Madame D'Arblay was as to the system which she pursued in correcting the proof-sheets of her works. On her intimating that no one corrected them but herself, "Why!" he remarked, with much shrewdness, "some authors have told me that they are the last to do that work for themselves. They know so well by heart what ought to be, that they run on without seeing what is. They have told me, besides, that a mere plodding head is best and surest for that work, and that the livelier the imagination the less it should be trusted to."

berg, for the first time deprived the king of the society of one of his dearly beloved daughters. The ceremony was performed in the Chapel Royal, St. James's, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the king giving away the bride. On the same day Hannah More writes to her sister Martha: "I am just come from attending the royal nuptials at St. James's. It was, indeed, a most august spectacle. The royal bride behaved with great feeling and modesty. The Prince of Wurtemberg had also a very becoming solemnity in his behaviour. The king and queen wept, but took great pains to restrain themselves. I forgot to say the king gave his daughter away, and it was really affecting. The archbishop read the service with great emphasis and solemnity. The newspapers will have described all the crape, and the foils, and the feathers, and the diamonds, etc. We were four hours in chapel."

The princess deserved all the affection with which she was regarded by her family, and especially by her father. Not only was he deeply affected during the marriage ceremony, but at their final leave-taking, on her departure for a foreign land, his agitation is said to have been painful to witness. "Your looks," he touchingly wrote to her on the following day, "painted more strongly your affection to me last night than any form of words could have conveyed; therefore, your letter of this morning, though it has given

me much pleasure, has not surprised me. May Heaven bestow its choicest blessings on you, and ever believe that my affections will always be of the tenderest kind, as I am certain your conduct will always justify my opinion of you."

CHAPTER XIV.

Great Naval Victories Gained by Lords St. Vincent and Duncan — Public Thanksgiving in St. Paul's Cathedral — The King at Weymouth in 1798 and 1799 — The King and Doctors Burney and Herschel — Death of Earl Howe — Further Affectionate Letters from the King to the Howe Family — The Bishop of St. David's the King's Personal Nominee to the Primacy of Ireland — The King's Narrow Escape from a Musket-ball in Hyde Park — Shot at by Hadfield — In Favour of Union with Ireland — Distressed at Pitt's Projected Catholic Emancipation Bill — Pitt's Resignation — — Addington becomes Premier.

In the month of February, 1797, the dark aspect of public affairs was at length cheered by the great naval victory which the skill of Sir John Jervis and the valour of Nelson enabled them to obtain over the Spaniards off Cape St. Vincent. The British fleet on that occasion consisted only of fifteen sail of the line, while that of Spain numbered no fewer than twenty-seven, including six of 112 guns and one of 136 guns, the celebrated *Santisima Trinidad*. For this great achievement, Sir John Jervis was created Earl St. Vincent, and awarded a pension of £3,000 a year, while Nelson had to be content with an empty, pitiful knighthood.

This success was followed by another important naval victory, which took place on the 11th

of October, when the British fleet, under Admiral Duncan, encountered, off Camperdown, the Dutch fleet, commanded by Admiral De Winter; the result being that, after a hard-fought action, eight of the enemy's ships of the line, including the flag-ships of the Dutch admiral and vice-admiral, and four frigates, were captured, and that three line-of-battle ships only had the good fortune to escape. "The valour of the navy," writes the king to Bishop Hurd, on the 19th of October, "never shone more than in the late glorious action off Camperdown, on the Dutch coast, and I trust its effects will render our enemies more humble, and that while my subjects praise the conduct of the officers and sailors, that they will return thanks, where most due, to the Almighty, who has crowned their endeavours with success. I feel this last sentiment so strongly, that I proposed to order a thanksgiving on the occasion, in which I mean to join, in consequence of the success over the Dutch, the two memorable battles of Earl Howe over the French, and the Earl of St. Vincent over the Spaniards. Without true seeds of religion, no people can be happy, nor will be obedient to legal authority; nor will those in command be moderate in the exercise of it, if not convinced that they are answerable to a Higher Power for their conduct. But were I to indulge myself on this subject, I should certainly obtrude too long on your patience. I will, therefore, con-

clude with every assurance of feeling much interest, my good lord, in your health and happiness."

"I was in the room at Windsor Castle," writes an accomplished lady, who stood high in the esteem of the king and queen, "when the news was brought of the victory over the Dutch fleet, at Camperdown, by Admiral Duncan. The king seemed overpowered with its magnitude, and, pacing up and down the long, dark room in which he usually sat, appeared occasionally to ejaculate something in a low voice, when the Princess Augusta said to him, 'Papa, you are not half happy enough; so many of the Dutch have fallen, and so few of our English!' Repeating her observation, he turned short, as if awakened from a reverie, and said, with a sharpness not usual with him, 'Remember, Augusta, there are just as many orphans as if they were all English!' So feelingly and meekly did he bear prosperity!"

On the 19th of December, this year, the two great victories won by Jervis and Duncan, now severally Earl St. Vincent and Viscount Duncan, were celebrated, by the king's commands, with considerable pomp in St. Paul's Cathedral. On that day a solemn procession, consisting of the king and queen and the royal family, of the great officers of state and of the royal household, of the Houses of Lords and Commons, the principal naval commanders, and a detachment of seamen and marines bearing flags and ensigns, repaired,

through streets lined with soldiers, to the great metropolitan church. The interior of the vast building presented a most imposing spectacle. The king and the royal family having taken their places, the principal naval officers filed past them, bearing various flags captured from the French, the Spaniards, and the Dutch. Admiral Sir Alan, afterward Lord Gardiner, carried the principal French standard, taken by Lord Howe on the 1st of June, 1794, and Lord Duncan the colours of his captured enemy, *De Winter*. It may be mentioned that the king, on his way to the cathedral, was received with enthusiasm by the populace, while Mr. Pitt, on the contrary, met with so insulting a reception that he wisely stopped to dine in Doctors Commons, and at night returned in the carriage of a friend instead of in his own.

The years 1798 and 1799 passed away without any event of importance disturbing the even tenor of the king's domestic life. Part of both of the summers of these years was passed at Weymouth, which had now become a favourite occasional residence of the king. Here he was staying in the month of August, 1798, when the news of Nelson's great victory of the Nile reached England; and here also we find him in the following summer, heartily enjoying a respite from kingly harass and toil. The favourite actor, "Jack" Bannister, used to delight in recounting the king's kindness to him at Weymouth; how frequently his Majesty

attended the theatre when he performed, how he patronised his benefit, and invited him to sail in the royal yacht, whenever his theatrical engagements permitted.

It was on a beautiful summer morning this year, that Dr. Charles Burney, the father of the authoress of "Evelina," being on a visit to the celebrated astronomer, Herschel, strolled with his host from Slough to Windsor, in order to attend divine worship in St. George's Chapel. At the termination of the service, as the doctor informs us, they were cheered by a glimpse of the good king, in his light gray, farmer-like Windsor uniform; but the crowd at the chapel door was much too great to afford the king a chance of recognising them. In the evening, however, they were more successful. "At dinner," writes Doctor Burney to his daughter, "we all agreed to go to the terrace. I never saw it more crowded or gay. The park was almost full of happy people, farmers, servants, tradespeople, all in Elysium. When the king and queen, arm in arm, were approaching the place where the Herschel family and I had planted ourselves, one of the Misses Parry heard the queen say to his Majesty, 'There's Doctor Burney!' and they instantly came to me, so smiling and gracious, that I longed to throw myself at their feet. 'How do you do, Doctor Burney?' said the king; 'why, you are grown fat and young!' 'Yes, indeed,' said the queen; 'I was very glad to

hear from Madame D'Arblay how well you looked.' 'Why, you used to be as thin as Doctor Lind!' says the king. Lind was then in sight, a mere lath. But these few words were accompanied with such very gracious smiles, and seemingly affectionate good humour, — the whole royal family, except the Prince of Wales, standing by, in the midst of a crowd of the first people in the kingdom for rank and office, — that I was afterward looked at as a sight. After this, the king and queen hardly ever passed by me without a smile and a nod. The weather was charming, the park as full as the terrace, the king having given permission to the farmers, tradesmen, and even livery servants, to be there during the time of his walking."

At night, the doctor of music and the astronomer attended, by royal invitation, the king's private concert at the castle. The king, soon after their arrival, advanced to converse with them. Doctor Burney, it seems, was employed at this time in writing a "Poetical History of Astronomy," of which fact some intimation had reached the king. "The first question," writes the doctor, "his Majesty asked me was, 'How does astronomy go on?' I, pretending to suppose he knew nothing of my poem, said, 'Doctor Herschel will better inform your Majesty than I can.' 'Ay, ay,' says the king; 'but you are going to tell us something with your pen,' and moved his hand in a writing manner. 'What — what progress have

you made?’ ‘Sir, it is all finished, and all but the last of twelve books have been read to my friend Doctor Herschel.’ The king then looking at Herschel as who would say, ‘How is it?’ ‘It is a very capital work, Sir,’ says Herschel. ‘I wonder how you find time,’ said the king. ‘I make time, Sir.’ ‘How? how?’ ‘I take it out of my sleep, Sir;’ when the considerate, good king said, ‘But you’ll hurt your health. How long,’ he added, ‘have you been at it?’ ‘Two or three years, at odd and stolen moments, Sir.’ ‘Well,’ said the king, ‘whatever you write will, I am sure, be entertaining.’ I bowed most humbly, as ashamed of not deserving so flattering a speech. ‘I do not say it to flatter you,’ said the king; ‘if I did not think it I should not say it.’”

On the 5th of August, 1799, at the age of seventy-three, died, at his house in Grafton Street, London, the king’s favourite and distinguished admiral, Earl Howe. The nature of the king’s feelings on this sad occasion will be best understood by a perusal of the following beautiful letter, addressed by him to his old friend, Mrs. Howe, the sister of the deceased earl :

The King to the Honourable Mrs. Howe.

“WEYMOUTH, September 2, 1799.

“I trust Mrs. Howe knows me better than to suppose my long silence on the great loss the public has sustained, as well as her family, by

the unexpected death of her excellent brother, has been occasioned by any other motive than the desire not to intrude while she was so fully employed in acts of attentive kindness to her relations, who must have found much comfort from such attention. I trust the example he has set to the navy will long continue to stimulate, not only the matchless bravery of the officers, but convince them of the necessity to view the profession in a scientific light, by which alone those improvements are to be acquired, which will retain that superiority over other nations, which every Englishman must desire.

“His exemplary conduct in private life must, on the present melancholy occasion, be the only true comfort to those who loved him, as it gives that hope of his having quitted this transient world for eternal happiness, through the mediation of our blessed Redeemer. If I did not feel the propriety of not adding more on so glorious a theme, my pen would but too willingly continue.

“The family, I find, are removed to Porters Lodge. The first moments there were of fresh sorrow, but I trust that the quietness of the place, and the good air, will be of use. I fear Mrs. Howe does not now render that justice to air she formerly did; but if she was here and saw how well it agrees with her little friend, and how much she hops about, I think she could not deny it has some efficacy.

GEORGE R.”

This interesting letter was but the precursor of other marks of kindness and sympathy on the part of the king. "You will like to know," writes the widowed countess to Sir Roger Curtis, on the 14th of January following, "that nothing can have been more strongly marked than the king's affection and regrets. The queen came over to me as soon as she returned from Weymouth, and the king ordered my daughters to see him first in private, as less painful to them and to himself. But I must stop writing. This is a subject I could for ever dwell upon, but it will be painful to you and hurtful to me."

Within less than three months from this time, Lady Howe was prostrated by a second affliction, scarcely less severe than the first. Her beloved and accomplished daughter, Lady Mary Howe, the promised bride of an amiable nobleman, George, Earl of Morton, lord chamberlain to the queen, was, with almost awful suddenness, hurried to the tomb. "It now again falls to me," writes Mrs. Howe on the 10th of April, "to acquaint you with an event you will most heavily feel. Lady Mary, who was to have married Lord Morton in a few weeks, the man of her choice, and with the highest approbation of all her friends and of all who loved her,—and who, ever acquainted with that most perfect of human beings, did not love and adore her?—was seized by a violent fever, which had been coming on

some days, and took to her bed on Sunday evening, the 30th of March ; and yesterday, the 9th of April, we lost her. Lady Howe is overwhelmed in sorrow, and in her state of health I think the worst is to be feared." The sad event must have been immediately communicated to the king, inasmuch as the following letter is dated the same day on which Lady Mary died :

The King to the Honourable Mrs. Howe.

" QUEEN'S HOUSE, April 9th, 1800.

"The king would not for one moment have diverted Mrs. Howe from her heroic efforts to support Countess Howe on the fresh severe affliction she has met with, but from the strong desire he has that, on the first proper occasion, she will express in his name to the countess how sincerely he participates in her grief. It is impossible to have known the truly angelic mind now departed, and be insensible to the feelings of the excellent mother.

"The king trusts that the true confidence the countess has always placed in divine Providence will be her true stay on this most trying occasion, and that both she and the Baroness Howe will not too strongly struggle against the real feelings of nature. Tears are the necessary indulgence on such an occasion ; and divine Providence certainly cannot blame humanity for giving way to what alone in the first moments can give ease. The mind must

have obtained some calm before the only true assistant, religion, can give its real aid. My mind is so full I could add much more, but stop on reflecting that I am detaining Mrs. Howe, whose good sense and singular resolution are necessarily employed in supporting the mother and daughter.

“GEORGE R.”

The strength of the drooping countess, as had been apprehended by those who were near and dear to her, sank under the weight of this last and heavy calamity. “On the 9th of August,” writes Mrs. Howe, “she was released from a year of sad sorrow, but her death was an easy one.” The event drew from the king the following further amiable evidence of his affection for the house of Howe :

The King to the Honourable Mrs. Howe.

“WEYMOUTH, August 10, 1800.

“Mrs. Howe’s constant exertions to be useful to her relations must be fully employed at the present moment in supporting Ladies Altamont and Howe in their scene of sorrow. Yet I could not refrain from wishing she would, at a proper time, express to them how sincerely I sympathise with them on the present melancholy occasion. It is impossible for any one who saw how deeply the late countess’s heart was affected, as well as the weakness to which her frame was reduced, to look

on her exit but as a release, and I am certain the great fatigue her daughters have in the most exemplary manner undergone, must have proved fatal to them if of much longer duration.

“They have most scrupulously fulfilled their duty to a most kind parent, but that toward their children must make them now attend to their own health, which I hope, by due care, may soon be reestablished.

GEORGE R.”

But while the king was sympathising with the sorrows of others, he himself had been suffering no slight anxiety on account of the delicate state of health of one of his own family, his youngest and beloved child, the Princess Amelia. It will be seen, however, by the following letter, that before the close of the year she was happily convalescent :

The King to the Bishop of Worcester.

“WINDSOR, Jan. 1, 1800.

“MY GOOD LORD :— The entering on a new century is so natural an occasion of writing to one whom I so thoroughly love, that I cannot refrain from putting my pen [to paper] though at the risk of breaking in upon your retirement. I shall not add to it by unnecessary compliments of the season, as I trust you are sensible of my feelings on that subject at all times.

“I have the satisfaction of assuring you that all my family are well. Even dear Amelia is, with

gigantic steps, by the mercy of divine Providence, arriving at perfect health. She was, on the 24th of last month, confirmed by her own request, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who seemed much pleased, in the preparatory conversations he had with her, at her being well grounded in our holy religion, and the serious task she was taking upon herself. On Christmas day he administered the holy communion in my chapel, with a solemnity and propriety that could not but give pleasure to those who partook of it.

"The sermon was preached by the Bishop of St. David's,¹ and a more excellent discourse or exposition of the Christian religion I never heard. Indeed, the five sermons he has preached at the cathedral on the five Sundays in December were equally to be admired, and all on Christianity, not mere moral subjects. I have pressed him to col-

¹ The Hon. William Stuart, fifth son of the king's former minister, John, Earl of Bute, was born in March, 1755. "Mr. William Stuart," writes M. Dutens, about the year 1780, "was a young man of twenty-five years old, who had always applied himself very much to study and reflection. He had very extensive knowledge, well-digested erudition, great taste, solid and sound judgment, an unequalled serenity of mind, and an indifference to the world, unexampled in a young man of his age. He was serious, mild, firm, and attached to his duty. He also had a constancy in his designs and in his conduct, which, with the aid of his talents, would have led him to the highest civil honours of his country; but he embraced the ecclesiastical state." While still a young curate (1782), we find Boswell introducing him to Doctor Johnson, as "a gentleman, being with all the advantages of high birth, learning, travel, and elegant manners,

lect the matter of them, with such further explanations as a treatise in support of our holy religion might require, and then publish what may be useful to others as well as highly creditable to himself. Young bishops ought to write, that their talents may be known.

"I know you are no great lover of political subjects, yet the impudent overthrow of the monstrous French Republic by a Corsican adventurer, and his creating himself to be lawgiver and executor of his own decrees, must have astonished you.¹ Without more foresight than common sense dictates, one may allege that his impious preëminence cannot be of long duration.

"My good lord, most affectionately yours,

"GEORGE R.

"*P. S.* My son, the Duke of York, who is here, has desired me to express the pleasure he has received from reading the letter I have shown

an exemplary parish priest in every respect." Doctor Stuart was promoted to the see of St. David's in 1793, and in 1800 to the archbishopric of Armagh. His death, which was occasioned by accidentally taking poison, under peculiarly painful circumstances, took place on the 6th of May, 1822, in his sixty-eighth year. The king, to whom Sir Henry Halford personally hastened to communicate the sad intelligence, naturally "deeply sympathised" with the family of a prelate whom he had so highly distinguished, respected, and loved.

¹ The king of course alludes to the seizure of the government of France by Napoleon, and his nomination as first consul, in the month of December, 1799.

him from Hartlebury. His words last night were, 'Why, this is the same amiable good man I knew as Bishop of Lichfield.' "

The King to the Bishop of St. David's.

"WINDSOR, Dec. 29, 1799.

"MY LORD:—The cordial satisfaction I have derived from hearing the five sermons you have preached during your residence, and that most excellent one at my chapel on Christmas day, obliges me to thank you on paper, and to assure you that I shall feel most happy when I shall judge it the proper opportunity to advance you to a more lucrative bishopric. Your talents and exemplary conduct would alone stimulate me, had I not the additional motive of your being a son of the truest and best friend I ever had, and out of regard to his memory I truly rejoice that he has in the Church and army two sons who will ever reflect credit on the name of Stuart.¹

"I cannot conclude without expressing my warmest hopes that you will publish some treatise in defence of the Christian religion.

"GEORGE R."

No long time elapsed, as will be seen by the three following letters, before the king had the

¹ The son in the army was Lieutenant-General, the Hon. Sir Charles Stuart, K. B.

satisfaction of being able to keep his promise to the Bishop of St. David's :

The King to Lady Charlotte Finch.

“WINDSOR, July 13, 1800.

“An earnest desire of promoting the permanent happiness of all my subjects actuates every desire of my heart ; and I am certain this can in no manner be more effectually attained than by the most careful attention in filling up the vacancies in the Church, and more particularly in the more exalted situations. This has made me reflect much on the now vacant archbishopric of Armagh, and I am clearly of opinion that the talents and zeal for religion, besides the being a man of noble family, points out the Bishop of St. David's as peculiarly suited for that preferment. Whilst he was out of health, I deferred wishing to know his sentiments on this subject, as on those occasions men are not able to judge with firmness, but rather view the difficulties that ever attend any change. I wish, therefore, Lady Charlotte Finch would, through the channel of Mrs. Stuart,¹ apprise the bishop of my earnest wish to place him where he can be of such use ; and that in point of emolument it is infinitely more lucrative than is in general supposed. I know that will not actuate him,

¹ Lady Charlotte Finch was aunt to Mrs. Stuart ; Lady Charlotte and Mrs. Stuart's mother, Lady Juliana Penn, being severally daughters of Thomas, first Earl of Pomfret.

but, at the same time, with an increasing family it ought not to be disregarded. GEORGE R."

The King to Lady Charlotte Finch.

"WINDSOR, July 18, 1800.

"Yesterday I received the Bishop of St. David's letter. The diffidence he expressed as to his health I rather expected, but, though the Irish climate is damp, it is uncommonly mild, and consequently not void of merit.

"I certainly had fully viewed the advantages that must arise to the cause of religion and virtue in Ireland by the promotion of the Bishop of St. David's to the vacant primacy of that part of the British empire, that I should not fulfil my duty if I did not in the most explicit manner now call on him to accept of that eminent situation ; nor do I think he would show the zeal I know he possesses for those two great objects, if he does not instantly yield to this fresh communication of my sentiments on this subject. GEORGE R."

The evident reluctance of Doctor Stuart to accept the primacy of Ireland appears to have been mainly owing to certain conditions with which the Duke of Portland sought to shackle his acceptance of that high dignity, the result of which was a correspondence between the bishop and his Grace, which the latter, apparently unacquainted with the king's strong personal views on the matter, thought

proper to lay before his Majesty. The king, it will be perceived, took in a very decided manner the part of the bishop, the consequence of which was his prompt translation from the see of St. David's to the archbishopric of Armagh :

The King to the Bishop of St. David's.

“KEW, October 16, 1800.

“I communicate to the Bishop of St. David's a copy of a letter I have this morning sent to the Duke of Portland, and call on him in the most serious manner to accept of that dignity in Ireland where I know he will do good, but approve of his not hampering himself with promises, which can by no means be advantageous to his new situation.

“GEORGE R.”

The King to the Duke of Portland.

“KEW, October 16, 1800.

“I have read the Duke of Portland's correspondence with the Bishop of St. David's, which he put yesterday into my hands. I confess I should have been glad if the Duke of Portland's natural desire of obliging had not been carried so far as to interfere by recommending an agent to the future Primate of Ireland, which, it not having been customary, he certainly would not have done to any English bishop. The getting a proper Archbishop of Armagh I look upon as an essential duty. I am convinced that in the Bishop of St. David's I

have found the most suitable person. I certainly trust he will do credit to my personal nomination, and prove a bright example to the Irish bench; but I can by no means wish he shall be hampered in his income, and he ought not to make any promises; but when, by going to Ireland, he shall have examined his affairs, place them in the manner he himself shall think most advisable. I certainly cannot accept the bishop's desire of declining what I think to the advantage of religion and good morals; and, therefore, desire the Duke of Portland will acquaint him that I have ordered the warrant for his appointment to the primacy to be prepared, as also one as Prelate of the Order of St. Patrick."

The 15th of May, 1800, was distinguished by two incidents that befell George the Third, which at the time created a considerable sensation. On the morning of that day the king was reviewing the Grenadier Guards in Hyde Park, when, during some firing from centre to flank, a gentleman of the name of Ongley, who was standing not much more than twenty yards from him, received a musket-ball in the fleshy part of one of his thighs. Subsequent inquiries induced the belief that the ball had slipped into the musket by accident; nevertheless, at the time, it was thought to be the work of an assassin. The king, however, manifested neither suspicion nor alarm. On the contrary, instead of quitting the ground, he calmly

rode toward the injured gentleman, at the same time giving directions for the surgeon of the grenadiers to examine and dress his wound, and enjoining Lord Cathcart, one of his military staff, to ascertain the address of the sufferer, whom he subsequently caused to be attended at his own residence by two military medical officers of rank. "At a review of the guards in Hyde Park," writes an accomplished contemporary, on the same day, "a person was shot who stood at no great distance from the king, a clerk in the navy office. The ball pierced his thigh, then went through the coat of a Frenchman, and spent itself against the breast of a boy, without doing him any harm." "The king," writes the same authority, "very manfully stood five volleys after the accident took place. When it was proposed to send the princesses away, he said, 'I will not have one of them stir for the world.'"

But it was the second peril which befell the king in the course of the twenty-four hours, that occasioned the greatest amount of excitement among his subjects. It had been publicly announced that, in the evening, he was to attend the performances at Drury Lane Theatre. The play which he had bespoken was Colley Cibber's sprightly comedy, "She Would and She Would Not." As might be expected, the theatre was crammed to the roof with a loyal audience, anxious to congratulate their sovereign on his recent escape. The first notes, therefore, of "God Save

the King" no sooner announced the king's arrival, than the building rang with a burst of joyous acclamation, which, a moment afterward, was converted into an uproar of consternation and rage. The king, on entering the royal box, had proceeded at once to the front of it, and was in the act of bowing his thanks to the audience, when a man, who had secured a place in the front row of the pit, availing himself of the opportunity of every eye in the theatre being directed toward the royal box, stood up on one of the benches, and deliberately discharged a horse-pistol, at the king. Two slugs passed over the head of the king, who, notwithstanding the imminence and suddenness of the peril, never for a moment lost his self-possession. "Never," writes Michael Kelly, the author of the "Reminiscences," who was on the stage at the time, "shall I forget his Majesty's coolness. The whole audience was in an uproar. The king, on hearing the report of the pistol, retired a pace or two, stopped, and stood firmly for an instant ; then came forward to the front of the box, put his opera-glass to his eye, and looked around the house without the smallest appearance of alarm or discomposure. the lord chamberlain, the Earl of Salisbury, urged the king to retire into the anteroom of the royal box, but the advice was peremptorily rejected. "Sir," he said, "you discompose me as well as yourself ; I shall not stir one step." All his anxiety seemed to centre in the queen and princesses,

who, not having entered the royal box at the moment when the shot was fired, might possibly receive exaggerated accounts of what had occurred ; and accordingly, with his usual promptitude, he ordered that the stage-curtain should be at once drawn up and that the performances should commence as if nothing unusual had happened. Three times, during the night, the national anthem was demanded by the audience ; Mrs. Jordan, on the second occasion, slipping into the hands of Kelly the following additional stanza, which Sheridan had composed behind the scenes on the spur of the moment :

“ From every latent foe,
From the assassin's blow,
God save the king !
O'er him thine arm extend ;
For Britain's sake defend
Our father, prince, and friend ;
God save the king ! ”

Kelly's voice, as he himself informs us, faltered with agitation as he repeated the stanza ; yet it did not prevent its being three times called for by the audience, and three times received with the most rapturous approbation.

Another eminent actor, who performed before the king on this occasion, was John Bannister, who in later years used to take a pleasure in recounting to his friends the incidents of that eventful evening. From the time, he said, that

the shot was fired, the audience continued restless and inattentive ; the agitation felt by the actors was evident by the slovenly manner in which they went through their parts ; while the only person who remained calm and self-possessed was the object of all this commotion, the king himself. It was one of the peculiarities of George the Third, when he attended the theatre, to doze for a few moments between the conclusion of the play and the commencement of the afterpiece. This luxury it might be supposed he would have foregone on the present exciting occasion. On the contrary, he closed his eyes at the accustomed time, and, to the surprise of his suite, enjoyed his nap as usual. The queen and the princesses, on the other hand, are said to have been constantly in tears during the evening. "The king," writes Hannah More to one of her sisters, "was wonderfully great and collected through the whole ; but when the house continued shouting for an unreasonable length of time, he appeared much affected, sat down, and looked for a moment on the ground. When he got home he said to the queen : 'As it is all safe, I am not sorry it has happened, for I cannot regret anything that has caused so much affection to be displayed.'"

In the meantime, the intended assassin had been immediately seized by the persons near him, and dragged over the spikes of the orchestra into the music-room beneath the stage. His name proved

to be James Hadfield. He had formerly been a loyal and gallant soldier in the 15th Light Dragoons, and, as was afterward adduced in evidence, had been more than once severely wounded in the head. At his trial for high treason, which took place at the court of King's Bench on the 26th of June, it was proved by the clearest evidence that he was afflicted with insanity, on which ground he was consequently acquitted, and ordered to be committed to Bedlam for the remainder of his days. So crowded, it may be mentioned, was the first levee held by the king after the attempt on his life, that Somerville, the historian, who was to have been presented to him by the Duke of Portland, was compelled to return to his lodgings disappointed of the expected honour. "The multitude," he writes, "of persons of distinction, of every party, who came to offer their congratulations to his Majesty upon that event, was beyond what had been remembered, and left no time for new introductions. I was amply compensated for my disappointment by witnessing the congratulatory addresses of the Houses of Parliament, and of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, presented to his Majesty on the throne, and hearing his answer, delivered with great dignity, and with sensible emotion when he referred to the danger which he had escaped."

During the summer of 1800, we find the king taking a strong interest in the progress through

Parliament of that wise and salutary measure, the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland, the expediency of which he had long since been one of the first to advocate.¹ To Mr. Pitt he writes, on the 6th of May: "I shall receive the joint address of the two Houses, which will, I trust, effect one of the most useful measures that has been effected during my reign, — one that will give stability to the whole empire, and, from the want of industry and capital in Ireland, be little felt by this country as diminishing its trade and manufactures; for the advantages to Ireland can only arise by slow degrees, and the wealth of Great Britain will undoubtedly, by furnishing the rest of the globe with its articles of commerce, not feel any material disadvantage in that particular from the future prosperity of Ireland." Notwithstanding the hostility to the passing of the Act of Union, on the part of Fox, Sheridan, Grey, and Tierney, it became, on the 2d of July, the law of the land, and on the 1st of January, 1801, the imperial union banner waved for the first time over Dublin Castle.

Unhappily, two consequences of the union were

¹ He [the king] was one of the first to foresee, not only the necessity of a legislative union with Ireland, but some of those special reasons which most directly produced it; the unmanageable character, for instance, of Irish patriotism, "which," he says in 1772, "must sooner or later oblige this country to consider whether the uniting to this Crown will not be the only means of making both islands flourish."

the loss to the country, for a long time to come, of the services of Mr. Pitt, and the infliction on the king of an amount of distress and anxiety such as he could little have anticipated. Mr. Pitt, it is true, had succeeded in uniting the two countries by closer bonds to each other; but, at the same time, no one was more fully aware that, unless some equitable and substantial concessions were extended to the Irish Roman Catholics, — such, for instance, as permitting them to sit in Parliament and to hold offices of state, and, more especially, the making a state provision for the maintenance of the Irish Roman Catholic clergy, — the union would be rendered little more than a name. The exclusion of this “great and healing measure” proved, to use the words of the late Sir George Lewis, an “irreparable calamity.” “It retarded,” writes that accomplished statesman, “the measure of Catholic emancipation by a quarter of a century, and left it to be extorted by intimidation. It created O’Connell’s power and gave importance to the repeal agitation. Above all, it has left the Protestant and Catholic churches of Ireland in their present anomalous state, with little prospect of this great defect in our internal polity being removed by a fair and equitable adjustment.”¹ Moreover, Mr. Pitt had another strong,

¹ Long since, the late Mr. Croker had earnestly advocated the justice and wisdom of making a state provision for the Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland. He writes: “We take this

and indeed personal, motive for pressing the question of Catholic emancipation upon the consideration of his sovereign. During the time that he had been engaged in carrying the union into law, he had held out expectations to the leading Roman Catholics that, on condition of their assisting him in the furtherance of the great work which he had on hand, he would, sooner or later, introduce a Catholic Relief Bill into Parliament. Those expectations he now felt himself bound in honour to do all in his power to realise.

Considering the significant facts that not only a section of the Cabinet, but that the Primates of England and Ireland, the lords chancellors of those two countries, the Chief Justice of England,

opportunity of repeating our solemn admonition that, until this step be taken, Ireland never can be reclaimed from the political disaffection, the religious bigotry, and the Celtic barbarism which are the real causes of all her material as well as her moral miseries." Mr. Croker at the same time assumes that these were "his Majesty's views on this subject;" but on this point he was mistaken. To Mr. Pitt we find the king writing, on the 24th of January, 1799: "I cannot help expressing to Mr. Pitt some surprise at having seen, in a letter from Lord Castle-reagh to the Duke of Portland on Monday, an idea of an established stipend, by the authority of Government, for the Catholic clergy of Ireland. I am certain any encouragement to such an idea must give real offence to the Established Church in Ireland, as well as to the true friends of our Constitution; for it is certainly creating a second Church establishment, which could not but be highly injurious. The tolerating Dissenters is fair, but the trying to perpetuate a separation in religious opinions, by providing for the support of their clergy as an establishment, is certainly going far beyond the bounds of justice or policy."

the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, the bench of bishops, and apparently a large majority of the people of England, were opposed to Roman Catholic emancipation, very great doubt would seem to exist whether, even if the king had been favourable to the measure, Mr. Pitt would have succeeded in carrying it through the House of Commons, and, much more, through the House of Lords.¹ At all events, the king's repugnance to it was insurmountable. Not that, as has been already shown in these pages, intolerance in spiritual matters was one of his imperfections. On the contrary, few men in his dominions were more averse to every kind of religious persecution, or more willing to relieve Roman Catholic as well as Dissenter from the oppressive penal statutes which had been passed in the reigns of his predecessors. But, unfortunately, there had taken root in his heart, not only a conception that Catholic relief was fraught with peril to Church and state, but a profound conviction that, in the event of his conceding emancipation to the Roman Catholics, he would be guilty of the heinous crime of breaking his coronation oath. His famous declaration of conscience—that he had firmness sufficient to retire from a throne to a

¹ "I am satisfied," writes Tomline, Bishop of Lincoln, to Mr. Rose, "that it never can be carried through the House of Lords. I think that every bishop would be against it. It has already excited no small alarm amongst some of our bench."

cottage, and even to lay down his neck upon the block if his subjects required it, but that he had not resolution enough to break his coronation oath — has already been adverted to in these pages.¹ The oftener the king had perused the words of that oath, and the more attentively he had studied their import, the more he had convinced himself that any material concession, on his part, of political power to the Roman Catholics, would be tantamount to his committing perjury. Were he to consent to Catholic emancipation, he told the Duke of Portland, he should not only “betray his trust and forfeit his crown,” but in all probability, the framers of the measure would sooner or later be brought to the scaffold. It

¹ The following is the passage in the coronation oath, the king’s interpretation of which entailed upon him so much uneasiness and perplexity:

Archbishop or Bishop — “Will you to your power cause law and justice in mercy to be executed in all your judgments?”

King and Queen — “I will.”

Archbishop or Bishop — “Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law? And will you preserve unto the bishops and clergy of this realm, and to the churches committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain unto them, or any of them?”

King and Queen — “All this I promise to do.”

After this the king and queen, laying his and her hands upon the Holy Gospels shall say:

King and Queen — “The things which I have herebefore promised, I will perform and keep. So help me God.”

was the duke's expressed conviction that the king, rather than yield to the demands of his ministers, would have suffered martyrdom.

Such were the king's views in regard to this all-important question, at the time when he received the indirect and startling intelligence of Mr. Pitt's intention to introduce his emancipation measure into Parliament. If anything could have increased the distress which that communication occasioned him, it was the distrustful and ungracious caution with which his ministers had kept back from him all knowledge of their intentions. "I was certain," the king afterward wrote to Lord Grenville, "if they had openly, in the beginning, stated their opinions to me, I should have been able to avert it entirely." It was the only difference of opinion, said the king to General Budé, which had ever happened between Mr. Pitt and himself. The measure, he added, "had taken him quite by surprise, and hurt him much." So little consideration, indeed, had been shown him, that, notwithstanding it was Pitt's intention to introduce the subject of Catholic relief in the speech which the sovereign was to deliver from the throne on the 2d of February, it was not till the 28th of the preceding month that the king was apprised, and then only indirectly, of the fact.¹ On that day, his manner and language

¹ Pitt's letter to the king, announcing "ministerially" the intentions of the Cabinet, is dated January 31st, and was received

at his levee at St. James's unmistakably betrayed the uneasiness of his thoughts. Alluding to Lord Castlereagh, then chief secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, he observed to Mr. Windham, secretary at war, that he should look upon any one who voted for Catholic emancipation as "personally indisposed toward him." To Mr. Dundas he expressed himself in a still more energetic manner. "What!" he exclaimed, in a voice loud enough to be overheard by those who were near him, "What is this, that this young lord has brought over, which they are going to throw at my head? I shall reckon any man my personal enemy who proposes any such measure — the most Jacobinical thing I ever heard of!" It was probably on this occasion that, on Dundas endeavouring to explain to him the difference between his personal and legislative duties, he interrupted him with the blunt rejoinder, "None of your Scotch metaphysics, Mr. Dundas."

Among the few statesmen of the day whose by the king on the 1st of February. His Majesty, it appears, had been privately informed by Lord Loughborough at Weymouth, so long ago as the month of September, that the question of Roman Catholic relief was at that time under the consideration of certain members of the Cabinet. Possibly he may since then have had reason for believing that his ministers had abandoned their intention of taking any active steps in the matter, or otherwise it is difficult to account for the great surprise which he appears to have manifested at his levee on the 28th of January.

probity and good sense had raised them high in the estimation of George the Third, was Henry Addington, afterward Viscount Sidmouth, at this time Speaker of the House of Commons. Hitherto, the king had distinguished him by no extraordinary marks of personal favour, and, consequently, the Speaker was not a little surprised when, on the evening of the 29th, a long and confidential letter from the king — the first letter with which he had ever been honoured by his sovereign — was placed in his hands. In this remarkable document, the king confides to the Speaker the “very strong apprehensions” which he entertains that “a most mischievous measure” for enabling Roman Catholics to sit in Parliament is in contemplation by the Cabinet, and earnestly urges him to use his utmost endeavours to divert his friend, the premier, from his purpose. “I should be taking up the Speaker’s time very uselessly,” writes the king, “if I said more, as I know we think alike on this great subject. I wish he would, from himself, open Mr. Pitt’s eyes on the danger arising from the agitating this improper question, which may prevent his ever speaking to me on a subject on which I can scarcely keep my temper.”

The Speaker at once sought an interview with Mr. Pitt, upon whose mind he endeavoured to impress his own strong convictions and those of his royal master, but whom he found quite as

impracticable as the king. The effect of this interview was to evince to the premier the necessity of his at once coming to a distinct understanding with his sovereign, and accordingly, on the 31st of January, we find him addressing a letter to the king, in which, in respectful and almost affectionate language, he leaves to his royal master the option of either permitting the proposed Emancipation Bill to be introduced into Parliament with his "full concurrence and with the whole weight of government," or else sanctioning the retirement of his faithful minister from a situation which, in Mr. Pitt's further words, he "is conscious, under such circumstances, he could not continue to fill but with the greatest disadvantage." "In such case," adds Mr. Pitt, speaking of himself in the third person, he will "carry with him into a private situation that affectionate and grateful attachment which your Majesty's goodness, for a long course of years, has impressed on his mind, and that unabated zeal for the ease and honour of your Majesty's government and for the public service, which he trusts will always govern his conduct."

This letter was no sooner received by the king than he summoned the Speaker to the royal closet. "The king," he writes to his new ally, "has received this morning the expected paper from Mr. Pitt. He is desirous of returning an answer to it in the course of the day, as he cannot bear to

keep a man, whom he both loves and respects, under a most unpleasant state of suspense, when on the real matter of the communication his Majesty's opinion is most completely and unalterably formed. He therefore is desirous of seeing Mr. Speaker of the House of Commons this forenoon, as early as Mr. Addington's attendance at divine worship may be over, and that he will then come here in his walking-dress." The result of their conference was a reply from the king to his first minister, in which, after expressing his "cordial affection" for him, as well as his "high opinion of his talents and integrity," and his unwillingness to lose "the advantage and comfort of his advice and exertions in public affairs," he comes to the point which was the source of his present great uneasiness. His oath, he writes, is an obligation which it is impossible he can ever think of breaking; and accordingly, he proposes, as a compromise between them, that, for the future, each shall be silent on the subject of the contemplated measure, and thus "stave off" a question upon which it was most unlikely they should ever agree. "If," continues the king, "those who unfortunately differ with me will keep this subject at rest, I will, on my part, — most correctly on my part, — be silent, also. But this restraint I shall put upon myself from affection for Mr. Pitt; but farther I cannot go, for I cannot sacrifice my duty to any consideration."

These terms, Mr. Pitt, in a letter dated the 3d of February, respectfully declined to accede to, and consequently, in a final note to him, dated the 5th, the king reluctantly consented to his quitting his service.¹

How ill the king's mind was at rest at this trying period, there is ample evidence to prove. He was one day riding to Kew with one of his equerries, General Garth, when, after they had proceeded a short distance, he desired the general to ride closer to him. "I have not," he said, "had any sleep this night, and am very bilious and unwell;" adding that the pressure put upon him by Mr. Pitt, in regard to Catholic emancipation, was the cause of his indisposition. Not content with thus laying bare his feelings to his equerry, the king, on his arrival at Kew, desired the general to follow him to his library, and to read to him his coronation oath. Having done so, "Where," he exclaimed, excitedly, "is that power on earth to absolve me from the due observance of every sentence of that oath, particularly the one requiring me to maintain the Protestant reformed religion? Was not my family seated on the throne for that express purpose, and shall I be the first to

¹ "The perusal of the letter, writes the Bishop of Exeter, "can excite but one feeling toward his [the king's] memory, that of increased veneration for his single-minded, uncompromising, conscientious regard to the solemn obligation which the duties of his high office, and, above all, his oath, had imposed upon him."

suffer it to be undermined, perhaps overturned? No! I had rather beg my bread from door to door throughout Europe than consent to any such measure." These words of his late revered royal master, General Garth said he was "ready to attest if called upon;" adding that, in his private opinion, "they ought to be written in letters of gold."¹ On another occasion, after having read his coronation oath to his family, and inquired of them if they understood it, the king exclaimed, "If I violate it, I am no longer legal sovereign of this country, but it falls to the house of Savoy."²

The high post vacated by Mr. Pitt, the king immediately pressed upon Addington, who, on the plea of his own shortcomings, recommended his sovereign to choose a more eligible minister. The king, however, would take no denial. "Lay your hand," he said, "upon your heart, and ask yourself where I am to turn for support if you do not stand by me." Addington, no doubt, was very awkwardly situated. Although diffidence was, apparently, not one of the disadvantages which he had to contend against through life, the idea of

¹ From a communication made to Lord Sidmouth by General Garth, then "retired from the noise and bustle of this world, and preparing, as he humbly trusted, for a better."

² Cardinal York was still living, otherwise Charles Emanuel II., Duke of Savoy and King of Sardinia, was, at this period, *de jure*, or, rather, by hereditary descent, King of Great Britain. He was fifth in descent from King Charles the First.

superseding a statesman so preëminently famous as Mr. Pitt, could scarcely fail to cause him great embarrassment. Moreover, there were personal motives which induced him to shrink from supplanting his friend. Pitt and Addington had not only been acquainted in childhood, but, since then, they had associated on very intimate terms. Their fathers had been friends before them. Addington not only lay under personal obligations to Pitt, but may almost be said to have been indebted to him for his political existence. Eventually, however, these difficulties were mastered by the generosity of Pitt, who not only agreed with the king that it was Addington's duty to accept the premiership, but made him the offer of his full influence and support. "Addington," he said to him, "I see nothing but ruin if you hesitate." Thus pressed and entreated, the Speaker yielded to the wishes of his sovereign, though not without having delivered himself of certain modest protestations, which it is not improbable that he afterward recalled to mind with regret. He regarded himself, he told Lord Granville Leveson, as a "sort of *locum tenens*" for Pitt, to whom he should be most happy to restore the reins of government whenever the sacrifice might be demanded at his hands.

The following letters are interesting, as bearing upon the king's present difficulties and distress.

The King to the Earl of Westmoreland.

“QUEEN’S HOUSE, Feb. 10, 1801.

“The king is too much impressed with the solidity of the Earl of Westmoreland’s opinion on the unhappy question which has caused many of the ministry to retire, and particularly the one [Mr. Pitt] in whom his Majesty, not only from esteem for his talents, but real affection, placed his chief confidence, to have the least doubted of the lord privy seal on the present occasion. As the king did not see the Earl of Westmoreland last week, he desires he will call here in his morning dress at three this day.

GEORGE R.”¹

The King to the Bishop of Worcester.

“ST. JAMES’S, Feb. 13, 1801.

“My GOOD LORD :— It is ever a satisfaction to me to communicate with you on paper, as I have not the comfort of being able to do it personally.

“An unfortunate opinion implanted in the mind of Mr. Pitt, by persons in no way friends to our happy Church and state establishment, to bring in a bill enabling Dissenters to hold offices without

¹ Original MS. from a copy given by Lord Westmoreland, then lord privy seal, to Sir William Lowther, afterward Earl of Lonsdale. The king’s letter is in reply to one from Lord Westmoreland, in which he had apologised for not having attended the last levee or drawing-room, and expressed his duty to his Majesty. Lord Westmoreland was opposed to Catholic emancipation, and consequently remained in office on Mr. Pitt retiring from the premiership.

taking the Test Act, and repealing the law of 30 Charles II., which precludes papists from sitting in Parliament, has made me reluctantly permit him to retire from my service. My sense of my coronation oath, of the compact on which my family was invited to mount the throne, and the Act of Union with Scotland, precluded me from not opposing such an opinion. I have persuaded Mr. Addington to succeed Mr. Pitt, and can assure you his attachment to the Church is as sincere as mine, and you may depend on his equal attachment to our happy civil Constitution, and his being no admirer of any reforms or supposed improvements.

"I feel I have done my duty, and have the pleasure to add that all the most respectable, in both Houses of Parliament, promise their warmest support; and what may appear odd to one absent, Mr. Pitt will be a warm friend to my new administration.

GEORGE R.

"To the Lord Bishop of Worcester, Hartlebury Castle, Worcester."

The following letter from the king's favourite son must doubtless have afforded him much satisfaction:

The Duke of York to the King.

"YORK HOUSE, Feb. 13, 1801.

"Sir:—I have the honour to return your Majesty the papers which you were graciously pleased to allow me to peruse.

“ If my sentiments upon the question of Catholic emancipation, and of the repeal of the Test Act, had not been already immutably fixed, the arguments adduced in favour of the measure would alone have been sufficient to have convinced me of the danger, if not of the absolute certainty, of the dreadful consequences of its being carried into execution. I have the honour to be, Sir,

“ Your Majesty’s most dutiful son and subject,

“ FREDERICK.”

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